AMERICAN HUMOURISTS

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RECENT AND LIVING

SKETCHED AND SAMPLED

BY

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ALEXANDER GARDNER

Publisher to Her Majesty the Queen

PAISLEY: AND 26 PATERNOSTER SQUARE, LONDON

1897

PREFACE.

THE following sketches of American Humorous Authors were contributed originally, in part to the *Weekly Scotsman*, in part to the *People's Friend*, and were generally so well appreciated by the readers of these popular serial publications, that I am fain to believe many will be ready to welcome their appearance in the present collected and enduring form.

Not all, nor nearly all, the recent and living American Humourists are "laid out" here, of course. Washington Irving, John Godfrey Saxe, Joel Chandler Harris, Benjamin P. Shillaber, Robert J. Burdette, John Habberton, and others, may, indeed, be quoted as notable omissions. But our aim was not to build a biographical dictionary of the facetious writers of the New World; simply rather to sketch and sample, *con amore*, the handful of American Authors whose humorous writings in recent years have most favourably impressed the people of this country.

The biographical particulars and portraits—secured in some cases at first hand—should specially interest those who heretofore have known the subjects solely through the medium of their books and detached writings.

R. F.

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AMERICAN HUMOURISTS.

ARTEMUS WARD.

THE foremost of American humourists, and the founder of a school of humour which Mark Twain has continued and carried to unparalleled success, Charles Farrar Browne, familiarly known by his pen-name of "Artemus Ward," will be long held in loving remembrance in this country as well as on his native Continent. A man of a warm and genial disposition, he never made an enemy. A fellow of infinite jest, and a satirist of the liveliest kind, his ridicule was ever so heartily honest, and his fun so thoroughly good-natured, that the world was made at once happier and better by his presence in it. There are too many amongst us ready to believe —who take it for granted, indeed—that to be humorous

means to be insincere, to be irreverent, to be everything but what is becoming in a good man. But never was there a greater fallacy, never a greater injustice done to a highly respectable and intelligent order in the community. The true humourist is almost without exception what the Americans call "a white man," one without guile, one who walks in the sunshine and reflects the light from his lively being upon the life-path of his fellows, making that easier, and receiving happiness from seeing those happy around him. If it be true what Shakespeare announces through the mouth of the mooning Lorenzo, who says—

> "The man that hath no music in himself,
> Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,
> Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils,"

I should hold it not less so with regard to humour, which, making men happier, makes them better. No man ever had more real reverence in his nature than Artemus Ward. One who knew him personally has said, "He was sound, blameless, shrewd, sensitive, and affectionate." And he tells us himself—"I never stain my pages even with mild profanity. In the first place it is wicked, and in the second it is not funny." And that is just right as well as it is true. He who for the sake of success has to spice his joke with coarseness or irreverent allusion is no humourist in the real sense of the word. Out on such! Nature evidently meant him for a swineherd, and he has taken himself to the wrong *pen*.

And now to our subject more directly. Now to the genial Artemus. This bright particular star, whose warming, cheering light went out on English soil at the early age of thirty-three, was a native of Water-

ford, in the county of Maine, in the United States, and was born on the 23rd of April, 1834. The family circumstances induced his parents to take him from school before he had the opportunity of proceeding to the higher branches of study. Thus, while quite a boy, he was sent to learn the craft of printing in a small newspaper office in the little town of Skowhegan, some miles to the north of his native village.

In his sixteenth year he bade farewell to the *Skowhegan Clarion*—the paper on which he had been working up to this time—and set out to try his fortune in the metropolis of New England. Here he secured work as a compositor in the office of *The Boston Carpet Bag*, a mildly-comic journal conducted by Mr. B. P. Shillaber, the inventor of "Mrs. Partington," and made his first appearances in authorship. Boston, however, was not big enough to hold him. A study of the early career of Mr. Bayard Taylor as a travelling journeyman printer stimulated him to imitation, and quitting the "hub" he wandered through the State of Massachusetts, made two or three halts in the State of New York, and after a year or two came to a rest for a time in a little town called Tiffin, in Ohio. Here he undertook the double duties of reporter and compositor at a salary of four dollars a week, and led a joyous life, making many friends, and an occasional few dollars extra by employing the opportunities he had for saying a good word in his paper for those who deserved it.

He had not yet begun writing in the character of a showman, but "every travelling show that happened to touch the place found in him a patron," says Mr. Townsend in a newspaper sketch of his life, "and he was most generally behind the scenes happy as a king in the friendship of clown and acrobat, who recognised

in him the traditional good fellow and incipient genius." His writings in the Tiffin journal, *The Toledo Commercial*, humorous, witty, and sometimes veracious, began to attract attention, and in the summer of 1858, when he attained his twenty-fourth year, he received the invitation, which he readily accepted, to become local reporter of *The Cleveland Plain Dealer*.

Referring to this period of his life, and particularly his removal to Cleveland, in the course of a letter which he wrote to a friend from the house of his mother in Waterford in June 1864, when he had become famous, Browne himself says :—"I here commenced the Artemus Ward papers. The selection of that *nom de plume* was purely accidental. I wrote the first Ward sketch on a purely local subject, not supposing I should ever write another. Somehow the name Ward entered my head, and I used it."

It will be observed from the above that he made his first Ward sketch from a local subject—a real Artemus Ward—a real live showman, as has since been discovered, although Hingston has no reference to him in his life of the humourist. It was sometime soon after Browne's appointment to be local reporter of the *Plain Dealer* that the original Artemus and his whimsical literary immortaliser met, and the circumstances are worth describing. It was in winter, and the show business having been dull the previous summer, the old showman was not staying at any first-class hotel. He had, indeed, secured a small cheap store in a back street in Cleveland, where his snakes had gone to sleep until spring, and the bats had hung themselves up by one claw for the winter, and the monkey and his owner had nothing to do but attend to the store and stretch themselves out on a canvas bunk for an occasional nap. In

this humble little rendezvous the showman would read, smoke, and, best of all, spin yarns to any one who might drop in to while away an odd half-hour. Ever attracted by out-of-the-way folks and things, and preternaturally fond of the show fraternity, Browne introduced himself in characteristic fashion to this odd character one day by looking in at the door, and exclaiming, "Hello, old Beeswax! I hope you and the rest of the show are all well."

He was graciously received by the little old man, and many quiet smokes and long-winded yarns ensued. At length Browne said to him one day, "Ward, I am going to write you up."

The showman had no objection, and told him to go ahead. The first article he wrote was a short anecdote. The people laughed at it. Then he gave them a longer one. They laughed again, and that settled it. Now came the celebrated "Letter to the Editor," telling him that he was moving slowly along down towards his place, and asking him to write a letter saying how the show business is in his locality.

"My show," it proceeds, "at present consists of three moral Bares, a Kangaroo (a Amoozin little Raskal—'twould make you larf yerself to deth to see the little cuss jump up and squeal) wax figgers of G. Washington Gen. Taylor John Bunyan Capt. Kidd and Dr. Webster in the act of killing Dr. Parkman, besides several miscellanyus moral wax statoots of celebrated piruts & murderers, &c., ekalled by few & exceld by none. Now Mr. Editor, scratch orf a few lines saying how is the show bizness down to your place. I shall hav my hanbills dun at your offiss. Depend upon it. I want you should git my hanbills up in flamin stile. Also git up a tremenjus excitemunt in yr. paper 'bout my onparalelld

Show. We must fetch the public sumhow. We must wurk on their feelins. Cum the moral on 'em strong. If it's a temprance community tell 'em I sined the pledge fifteen minits arter Ise born, but on the contery ef your peple take their tods, say Mister Ward is as Jenial a feller as we ever met, full of conwiviality, & the life an Sole of the Soshul Bored. Take, don't you? If you say anythin abowt my show say my snaiks is as harmliss as the new born Babe. What an interestin study it is to see a zowological animil like a snaik under perfect subjecshun! My kangaroo is the most larfable little cuss you ever see. All for 15 cents. I am anxyus to skewer your influounce. I repeet in regard to them hanbills that I shall git 'em struck orf up to your printin office. My perlitecal sentiments agree with yourn exackly. I know they do, becaws I never saw a man whoos didn't."

"Wax figures?" said the original Ward, "I never had one in my show. Kangaroos? No, that 'amoozin cuss' was purely an invention of Browne's. Moral bears? Yes, I had a couple of cubs, and he used to torment them by squirting tobacco juice in their eyes."

It is well to know that some years after when the real and the assumed Artemus met they didn't smoke clay pipes and drink lager beer, but banqueted on more costly and inspiriting fare at the expense of the popular author and lecturer.

That first letter was speedily followed by other two of the same description, and the three together sufficed to ensure the popularity of the writer. They were copied into hundreds of papers throughout the United States, and "Artemus Ward" became a familiar word in every mouth.

And now ere the country had recovered itself from

laughing at his first palpable hit, Browne sent off a contribution—a mock interview with Brigham Young, the then head of the Mormon Church—to the American *Punch* of the time—*Vanity Fair*—published at New York, and edited by Charles Godfrey Leland, the popular author of the "Hans Breitmann Ballads," from this point to the end a trusted and true friend of the genial humourist. The result was an early invitation from the proprietors for the writer to accept the sub-editorship of the journal. He did so, and held his pen wagging merrily in the production of comic copy for a time in his position as sub-editor, and latterly as editor-in-chief, giving out some of the best things from his pen. There were elements of dissolution in the paper, however, which no antiseptic power or restorative energy on the part of the new editor was adequate to combat successfully, and in a short time *Vanity Fair* ceased to exist. To all appearance it never had been a publication of a robust nature. "They say that I can write comic copy," remarked Artemus to a friend. "Comic copy was what they wanted for *Vanity Fair*, I wrote some, and I killed it. The poor paper got to be a conundrum, and so gave itself up."

As much from necessity, perhaps, as choice, Browne now launched himself on the public as a comic lecturer, his idea being to deliver burlesques on serious lectures, rather than anything on the old and hackneyed lines. For the title of his first performance he chose "The Babes in the Wood," although for a time he thought of calling it "My Seven Grandmothers;"—and the one might have done just as well as the other, for from first to last of the lecture, with the exception of what was contained in the title, there was not a word about babes. This was his main joke.

As a lecturer he proved a splendid success; the charm being not always so much in what he said as in his manner of saying it. Mr. Hingston gives a vivid account of his style and appearance before the public when describing the first time he heard him. It was in Philadelphia, and the subject of his lecture, according to the bills, was "Sixty Minutes in Africa." A map of Africa was suspended at the back of the platform. "Except in the way of burlesque," says Mr. Hingston, "the map was useless.

"The lecturer commenced by telling his audience that his subject was Africa, and alluding to some of the natural productions of that country. When he told them it produced the red rose, the white rose, and the neg-roes they yelled with laughter. When he informed them that in the middle of the Continent there was what was called 'a howling wilderness,' but that for his part he never heard it howl nor met with any one who had, the audience shouted approbation; and when he told them that he believed the African to be his brother, but was not so fond of him as to believe him to be his sister, wife, and grandmother as well, the political feelings of the good Philadelphians were roused, and while the Democrats laughed uproariously, the Republicans enjoyed the joke with a dubious smile. All that the lecturer said was spoken by him as though it fell from his lips without premeditation, but I could notice that his eyes were keenly fixed upon his audience, and that he carefully watched the manner in which every sentence was received. Never once did he allow his face to relax from its continuous grave expression. Instead of joining in the laughter he had elicited, he seemed to wonder whence it had arisen, and to be slightly annoyed that he could not speak without being

laughed at. Some of the audience entered into the spirit of the affair, and were boisterously merry. Others attempted to be critical, but occasionally manifested their vexation at not being able to grasp anything which they could criticise, and some there were who simply regarded the speaker as a lunatic, and seemed ashamed that they had caught themselves laughing at him like the rest. There were nearly two thousand people in the hall, the heat was oppressive, and the merriest of the audience began to feel that ceaseless laughter was very hard work.

"Artemus Ward perceived that he had spoken long enough; and having just told a funny story, the scene of which was in Massachusetts, suddenly changed his tone of voice, and said:—'Africa is my subject. You wish me to tell you something about Africa. Africa is on the map. It is in all the maps of Africa that I have ever seen. You may buy a good map of Africa for a dollar. If you study it well you will know more about Africa than I do. It is a comprehensive subject—too vast, I assure you, for me to enter upon to-night. You would not wish me to, I feel that—I feel it deeply, and I am very sensitive. If you go home and go to bed it will be better for you than to go with me to Africa."

All this time his contributions to the press were being copied and recopied by the American as well as the British newspapers, and Artemus's fame as a lecturer spread far and near. From San Francisco all the way to New York a telegram came to him worded as follows:—"What will you take for forty nights in California?" His characteristic reply by wire was "Brandy and Soda," and although the arrangement was not effected on these simple terms, to California

he subsequently went. His way thither and back is too devious for us to follow. Suffice it to say that in California, as nearer home, his "show" was attended with the greatest success. But the leading ambition of his life was yet to be achieved—to visit England—to lecture in London, and contribute to *Punch*. And with this aim he set sail from New York in 1866, sending the following message as a herald of his coming:—

"I shall float myself across the big ditch soon. Get ready for me. See the Prince of Wales, and ask him to let me have a room for my show in St James's Palace. Any room will do. I can run round and board with the Royal Family. Their dinner hour will suit me. I am not particular."

To England accordingly he came, and struck London "all of a heap," so to speak. His lecture on the Mormons, delivered in the Egyptian Halls, and listened to by Charles Dickens and many of the men of light and leading in the capital at the time, was a brilliant success, and is harked back on with pleasurable feeling by some still living who were fortunate enough to hear it. Much of the success, we are told, was due to the manner and methods of the lecturer, which were inimitable; but some idea of the matter—rich enough in itself—will be gathered from these extracts.

Opening in a quiet, apologetic way, he said: "I don't expect to do much here, but I have thought that if I could make enough to buy me a passage out to New Zealand I should feel that I had not lived in vain. I don't want to live in vain. I had rather live in Margate, or here." The hall was crowded, and the heat oppressive, and his next remark was, "I wish when the Egyptians built this hall they had not forgotten the ventilation." Then he continued, "I really don't care for

money. I only travel round to see the world and exhibit my clothes. These clothes I have on were a great success in America. How often do large fortunes ruin young men. I should very much like to be ruined, but I get on very well as I am.

"I am not an artist, I don't paint myself, though perhaps if I were a middle-aged lady I should—yet I have a passion for pictures. When I was a boy I once drew a small cartload of raw turnips over a wooden bridge. The people of the village noticed me. I drew their attention. They said I had a future before me. Up to that time I had a notion it was behind me.

"Time passed on. It always does, by the way. You may have noticed that time passes on. It's a kind of way time has. I became a man. I haven't done much as an artist; but I have an uncle who takes photographs, and I have a servant who takes anything he can lay his hands on.

"I like art. I admire dramatic art, although I failed as an actor. It was in my schoolboy days that I failed as an actor. The play was the 'Ruins of Pompeii.' I played the ruins. It was not a successful performance. But I was better than the Burning Mountain. He was not good. He was a bad Vesuvius.

"The remembrance often makes me ask, Where are the boys of my youth? Some are among you here, some are in America, some are in prison.

"Hence arises a most touching question, Where are the girls of my youth? Some are married, some would like to be.

"Oh my Maria! Alas, she married another. They frequently do. I hope she is happy, because I am.

"A gentleman friend of mine came to me one day with tears in his eyes. I said, 'Why these weeps?' He

told me he had a mortgage on his farm, and wanted to borrow two hundred pounds. I lent him the money, and he went away. A short time after he returned to me with more tears. He said he must leave me for ever. I ventured to remind him of the two hundred pounds he had borrowed. He was much cut up. I didn't like to be hard on him, so I told him I would throw off one hundred pounds. He brightened, shook my hand, and said, 'Old friend, I won't allow you to outdo me in liberality; I'll throw off the other hundred.'

"I like music, although I don't sing. As a singist I am not a success. I am saddest when I sing. So are those who hear me. They are sadder even than I am.

"The other night some silver-voiced young men came under my window and sang, 'Come where my love lies dreaming.' I didn't go. I didn't think it would be correct.

"Brigham Young has two hundred wives. Just think of that. He loves not wisely, but two hundred well. He is dreadfully married. He is the most married man I ever saw. I saw his mother-in-law while I was in Utah. I can't say how many there are of her, but it's a good many. It strikes me that one mother-in-law is enough to have in a family, unless you are very fond of excitement.

"I regret to say that efforts were made to make a convert of me while I was in Utah. I called on seventeen young Mormon ladies one morning—the widows of a deceased Mormon—and taking their soft white hands in mine—which made eighteen hands altogether—I found them in tears. And I said, 'Why is this thus? What is the reason of this thusness?' They love a

sigh—seventeen sighs of different size. They said, 'Oh! soon wilt thou be gonested away!' I told them when I made up my mind to leave a place I wentested.

"When they said, 'Doth not like us?' I said, 'Oh! I doth, I doth.' I also said, 'I hope your intentions are honourable, because I am a lone orphan, my parents being far, far away.'

"They said, 'Wilt nŏt marry us?'

"I said, 'Oh, no. It cannot was!'

"When they said, 'Cruel man, this is too much, too much!'

"'Yes,' I said. 'I think it's a derned sight too much.' And I told them it was on account of the much-ness that I declined."

This lecture, praised as it was in the *Times*, and other leading papers, established his fame in this country. He received an order from Mark Lemon to write for the pages of *Punch*, and contributed in all eight articles, which are still worth reading. There would have been more, but already the canker-worm was at work in his constitution. The hand of death was upon him. "On many evenings," writes Hingston, his faithful agent and loving biographer, "while the audience were laughing at the jokes of the lecturer, the doctor was in attendance behind the panorama with stimulants and restoratives ready at hand." Poor Artemus was very unwilling to give up, but on the 23d of January, 1867, he lectured for the last time, and died at Southampton on the 6th of May in the same year. There was no wife, no child, left to mourn his loss. But there was a mother who longed for his coming, a mother whom he longed to see once—though but only once more with the human eye. As he lay dying, supported by the arms of Tom Hood, the younger, he whispered, "Don't tell my mother,

Tom. Don't let them write to her. Keep it from her for a year or two, and then she will not know it till she sees me on the other side. She is very old." They have met since!

Artemus had a favourite trick that he loved to indulge, and out of which he appeared to get a good deal of congenial fun. This was the disbursing of a rigmarole of nonsense in a solemn and impressive manner, as though he was saying something of unusual weight and importance. It was a game of mystification in which he greatly delighted. At a dinner given him by leading Comstockers, he played the trick on Mark Twain, all the others present being let into the secret beforehand. Artemus was seated beside Mark near the head of the table. Presently something was said about genius. Artemus at once cleared his throat and turning to Mark began, in a voice loud enough to attract the attention of all present and put a stop to general conversation, about as follows: "Ah, speaking of genius, Mr. Clemens, now, genius appears to me to be a sort of luminous quality of the mind allied to a warm and inflammable constitution, which is inherent in the man and supersedes in him whatever constitutional tendency he may possess to permit himself to be influenced by such things as do not coincide with his preconceived notions and established convictions to the contrary. Does not my definition hit the nail squarely on the head, Mr. Clemens?"

"I don't know that I exactly understand you," returned Mark. "Somehow I—I didn't fully grasp your meaning."

"No?" queried Artemus. And then he elevated his eyebrows and gazed at Mark with a countenance ex-

pressive of profound astonishment and some shifting shades of pity.

All the table gave utterance to half-smothered "humphs," snorts and grunts of disgust at Mark's stupidity.

"Didn't grasp my meaning?" said Artemus, "Why, that is very singular. However," he added, pulling himself together more hopefully, "I will try and express my idea more clearly. Genius, Mr. Clemens, does not appear to me to consist or rest merely in sensibility to that degree of beauty which is perceived by all, as there is an inherent illuminating power, the possession of which causes luminous ideas to dart like meteors across the intellectual firmament, and which, I say, checks in the person possessing it a tendency to permit himself to be influenced by preconceived opinions in regard to those beauties in nature, which all objects display to the eye of one of a warm and inflammable temperament, and which is not at all understood by those detractors who are constitutionally incapable of seeing those beauties. The——But I must have already made it plain to you, Mr. Clemens?"

"I am almost ashamed to say it," drawled Mark; "but, to tell you the truth, I was not able to catch your exact meaning. I will admit, however, that what you say appears reasonable enough, and you speak of it in a very logical and convincing tone of voice; still I somehow fail to grasp your idea of genius."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Artemus, and for half a minute he gazed at Mark with a face in which a shade of impatience began to mingle with astonishment and compassion. Then, heaving a sigh, he said:—"Well, perhaps I was not sufficiently explicit. What I wished to say was simply that genius is a sort of illuminating

quality of the mind inherent in those of constitutionally inflammable natures, and whose conceptions are not of that ambiguous and disputable kind which may be said——"

"Hold on, Artemus," interrupted Mark; "it is useless for you to repeat your definition. The wine, or the brandy, or the whisky, or some other thing has gone to my head. Tell it to me some other time; or, better still, write it down for me and I'll study it at my leisure."

"Good!" cried Artemus, his face beaming with pleasure. "I'll give it to you to-morrow in black and white. I have been much misunderstood in this matter, and it is important that I should set myself right. You see that to the eye of a person of a warm and inflammable nature, and in whose self-luminous mind ideas arise that are by no means confined to the material which conception furnishes, but may be——"

"For goodness sake!" cried Mark, "if you go at that again you'll drive me mad!"

The general burst of laughter which followed this feeling and half-angry protest made it plain to Mark that Artemus had been set to work on him with malice aforethought, and that all present were in the plot, and had been amusing themselves at his expense. Consequently, he was in no amiable mood during the remainder of the evening. He said, such a thing "might be thought by some to be smart," but he failed to see "where the fun came in."

In the spring of 1859 Mark Twain accepted a proffered editorial position on the *Cleveland National Democrat*, and renewed his acquaintance with Artemus.

On the first evening after his arrival Ward volun-

teered to show him around—a very desirable achievement, as he was to fill the position of city editor.

"He showed me around so successfully," says Mark, in an article describing the incident, "that about two o'clock in the morning I began to feel almost as much at home in Cleveland as though I had lived there all my days, to say nothing of my nights. Artemus invited me to share his bed with him for the remainder of the night, and I accepted. Adjoining his room lodged a young professor of elocution, who was endeavouring to establish a school in Cleveland. He was just starting out in business, and was naturally anxious to propitiate the press."

"Let's get the professor up," said Artemus, "and have him recite for us."

I remonstrated with him, reminded him of the lateness of the hour, that I wasn't acquainted with the professor, and all that; but to no purpose.

"He is a public man," said Ward, "and public men are glad to meet members of the press, as restaurants are supposed to get up warm meals, at all hours."

He gave a thundering rap on the door as he shouted—

"Professor-r-r!"

"Who's there? What yer want?" cried a muffled voice, evidently from beneath the bed-clothes, for it was a bitter cold night in February.

"It is I—Brown, of the *Plain Dealer*," said Artemus; and nudging me gently in the ribs, he whispered, "That'll fetch him. The power of the press is invincible. It is the Archimedean lever which——"

His remarks were interrupted by the opening of the door, and I could just discover the dim outline of a shirted form shivering in the doorway.

"Excuse me for disturbing you, Professor," said Artemus, in his blandest manner, "but I am anxious to introduce my friend here, the new 'local' of the *Democrat*. He has heard much of you, and declares positively he can't go to bed until he hears you elocute."

"Hears me what?" asked the professor between his chattering teeth.

"Hears you elocute—recite—declaim—understand?—specimen of your elocution."

In vain did the professor plead the lateness of the hour, and that his fire had gone out.

Artemus would accept no excuse.

"Permit me, at least," urged the professor, "to put on some clothes and light the gas."

"Not at all necessary. Eloquence, my dear boy, is not dependent on gas. Here," (straightening up a chair he had just tumbled over) "get right up on this chair, and give us 'The boy stood on the burning deck,'" adding, in a side whisper in my ear, "The burning deck will warm him up."

Gently, yet firmly, did Artemus boost the reluctant professor upon the chair, protesting that no apologies were necessary for his appearance, and assuring him that "clothes didn't make the man," although the shivering disciple of Demosthenes and Cicero probably thought clothes would make a man more comfortable on such a night as that.

He gave us "Casabianca," with a good many quavers of the voice, as he stood quaking, in a single short, white garment, and then followed "On Linden, when the sun was low," "Sword of Bunker Hill," etc., "by particular request of our friend," as Artemus Ward said, although I was too nearly suffocated with

suppressed laughter to make even a last dying request, had it been necessary.

It was too ludicrous to depict—the professor, an indistinct white object, standing on the chair "elocuting," as Ward had it, and we sitting on the floor, holding our sides, while A. W. would faintly whisper between his pangs of mirth, "Just hear him."

It wasn't in Ward's heart to have his fun at the expense of another without recompense; so next day, I remember, he published a lengthy and entirely serious account of our visit to the professor's "room," spoke of his wonderful powers as an elocutionist, and expressed the satisfaction and delight with which we listened to his "unequalled recitations."

The professor was overjoyed, and probably is ignorant to this day that Artemus was "playing it on him."

Mark Twain, it will be seen, had the greatest appreciation of his friend and fellow humourist. Some of the best known stories of his practical joking are from Mark's pen—the following among the rest:—

One day, while Ward was travelling in the cars, and feeling miserable, and dreading to be bored by strangers, a man took a seat beside him, and presently said,

"Did you hear the last thing about Horace Greeley?"

"Greeley? Greeley?" said Artemus. "Horace Greeley? Who is he?"

The man was quiet about five minutes. Pretty soon he said,

"George Francis Train is kicking up a good deal of a row over in England. Do you think they will put him in a Bastile?"

"Train? Train?—George Francis Train?" said Artemus solemnly. "I never heard of him."

This ignorance kept the man quiet for fifteen minutes; then he said,

"What do you think about General Grant's chances for the Presidency? Do you think they will run him?"

"Grant? Grant? Hang it, man," said Artemus, "you appear to know more strangers than any man I ever saw."

The man was furious; he walked up the car, but at last came back and said,

"You confounded ignoramus, did you ever hear of Adam?"

"Adam?" said Artemus, looking up with a puzzled look, "what was his other name?"

That was a poser, and knocked the stranger clean out.

Two brief extracts from Browne's general writings will bring this article to a close. The first is from

THE SHOWMAN'S COURTSHIP.

"'Twas a carm still nite in Joon. All nater was husht and nary zeffer disturbed the sereen silens. I sot with Betsy Jane on the fense of her farther's pastur. We'd been rompin threw the woods, kullin flowrs & drivin the woodchuck from his Nativ Lair (so to speak) with long sticks. Wall, we sot thar on the fense, aswingin our feet two and fro, blushin as red as the Baldinsville skool house when it was fust painted, and lookin very simple, I make no doubt. My left arm was ockepied in ballunsin myself on the fense, while my rite was woundid luvinly round her waste.

"I cleared my throat and tremblinly sed—'Betsy, you're a Gazelle.'

"I thought that air was putty fine. I waitid to see what effeck it would hav upon her. It evidently didn't fetch her, for she up and sed—

"'You're a sheep!'

"Sez I—'Betsy, I think very muchly of you.'

"'I don't b'leeve a word you say—so there now cum!' with which obsarvashun she hitched away from me.

"'I wish thar was winders to my Sole,' said I, 'so that you could see some of my feelins. There's fire enuff in here,' sed I, striking my buzzum with my fist, 'to bile all the corn beef and turnips in the naberhood. Versoovius and the Critter ain't a circumstans!'

"She bowed her head down and commenst chawin the strings to her sun bonnet.

"'Ar could you know the sleeplis nites I worry through on your account, how vittles has seized to be attractive to me, & how my lims has shrunk up, you wouldn't dowt me. Gase on this wastin form and these 'ere sunken cheeks——'

"I should have continnered on in this strane probly for sum time, but unfortunitly I lost my ballunse and fell over into the pastur ker smash, tearing my close and severely damagin myself ginerally.

"Betsy Jane sprung to my assistance in dubble quick time, and dragged me 4th. Then drawin herself up to her full hite she sed—

"'I won't listen to your noncents no longer. Jes say rite strate out what you're driven at. If you mean gettin hitched, I'M IN!'

"I considered that air enuff for all practical purpusses, and we proceeded immejitly to the parson's & was made 1 that very nite."

The next is from his article on "Woman's Rights," and contains a moral for many in the present time—male and female—although the words were originally addressed to the latter exclusively.

"My female friends," he says, "I've a few remarks to remark; wa them well. The female woman is one of the greatest institooshuns of which this land can boste. It's onpossible to get along without her. Had there bin no female wimin in the world, I should scarcely be here with my unparalleld show on this very occashun. She is good in sickness—good in wellness —good all the time. O, woman, woman! you air a angle when you behave yourself; but when you take off your proper appairel & (mettyforically speakin)— get into pantyloons—when you desert your firesides, & with your heids full of wimin's rites noshuns go round like roarin lyons, seekin whom you may devour somebody—in short, when you undertake to play the man, you play the devil, and air an emfatic noosance."

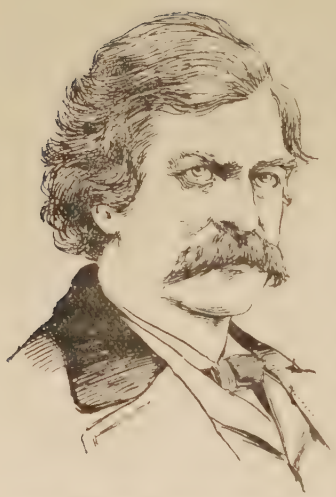
In the beautiful little Elmvale Cemetery which lies at the foot of Bear Mountain, in Waterford, Maine, is the grave of Artemus Ward, and this inscription is chiselled upon the plain marble slab which covers his remains:—

REST, LOVED ONE, REST.
Charles F. Browne,
Known to the world as
"Artemus Ward,"
DIED
in Southampton, Eng.,
March 6, 1867.
Aet. 33 yrs.
His memory will live as a sweet
And unfailing affection.

Verily, the world, as I have already said, is happier and better to-day from the fact that this man once lived in it. Though he has been dead these thirty years, he continues to be a moral as well as an amusing force on two continents. In Britain, as in America, his

trite observations, his funnier remarks, are chosen to give point to the wittiest and most effective speeches in Parliament and out of it. In his writings, moreover, sugar-coated as they are with humour, there are moral correctives, there is healthy stimulation, for life at the fireside, in the workshop, and in the world. He was just the kind of humourist that all men love. Blessed be the memory of Artemus Ward!

MARK TWAIN.



IN my paper on Artemus Ward I claimed for the "genial showman" that he had founded a school of humour which had been continued by Mark Twain, and carried by the latter to unparalleled success. This is exactly how the case stands. The living writer is the far more able, more literary, more intellectual of the two; but in the matter of form he received hints from his earlier brother humourist as distinctly valuable as Robert Burns in another way received from the author of "The Farmer's Ingle" and "Plainstanes and Causey," etc. Mark has not followed Artemus in his grotesque style of spelling, to be sure; and for this we thank him. It is a trick that tickles for a moment, perhaps; but being of itself a very faint and mechanical species of humour, it soon becomes wearisome.

Not here, then, is to be found his indebtedness. No. The imitation is discoverable in the joke-form peculiar to both. Each writer, it will be noted, begins in a serious—or apparently serious—mood, and produces his comic effects—or the best of them—by giving the

most ludicrous and unexpected turns to his sentences. And yet, while holding that Mark Twain imitates, or resembles, Artemus Ward in this striking characteristic, let no one suppose for a single moment that the author of *The Innocents Abroad* is a mere imitator, and nothing more. He occupies a greater space in literature than Artemus Ward could have filled had he lived for a hundred years, being far and away the more accomplished man of letters, having a wider sweep of mental vision, and possessing a much more vividly imaginative intellect.

Mark Twain might have made a reputation for himself as a serious writer had he not made the discovery so early in his career that humour brought in more money. In some of his earlier books—not his least successful ones—something like a struggle appears here and there as to whether comic or earnest writing should occupy his pen. In *The Innocents Abroad* the reader has to be watchful and quick to discern when he is serious and when in fun.

In *The Mississippi Pilot*, one of his earliest works, there occurs one of the most beautiful and vividly suggestive passages to be found in the whole range of modern literature. It is due to Mark Twain's genius as a literary artist that this should be quoted wherever lengthened reference is made to his work. He is speaking of the acquired instincts—the second nature of the pilot—and proceeds :—

"The face of the water, in time, became a wonderful book . . . not to be read once and thrown aside, for it had a new story to tell every day. Throughout the whole twelve hundred miles there was never a page that was void of interest. . . . There was never so wonderful a book written by man. . . . The

passenger who could not read this book saw nothing but all manner of pretty pictures in it. Painted by the sun and shaded by the clouds, whereas to the trained eye these were not pictures at all, but the grimmest and most dead-earnest of reading matter. Now, when I had mastered the language of this water, and had come to know every trifling feature that bordered the great river as familiarly as I knew the letters of the alphabet, I had made a valuable acquisition. But, . . . I had lost something which could never be restored to me while I lived. All the grace, the beauty, the poetry had gone out of the majestic river! I still keep in my mind a certain wonderful sunset which I witnessed when steamboating was new to me. A broad expanse of the river was turned to blood; in the middle distance the red line brightened into gold, through which a solitary log came floating, black and conspicuous; in one place a long slanting mark lay sparkling upon the water; in another the surface was broken by boiling, tumbling rings, that were as many-tinted as the opal; where the ruddy flash was faintest was a smooth spot that was covered with graceful circles and radiating lines, ever so delicately traced; the shore on our left was densely wooded, and the sombre shadow that fell from this forest was broken in one place by a long, ruffled trail that shone like silver; and high above the forest wall a clean-stemmed, dead tree waved a single leafy bough that glowed like a flame in the unobstructed splendour that was flowing from the sun. There were graceful curves, reflected images, woody heights, soft distances, and over the whole scene, far and near, the dissolving lights drifted steadily, enriching it, every passing moment, with new marvels of colouring.

"I stood like one bewitched. I drank it in, in a speechless rapture. The world was new to me, and I had never seen anything like this at home. But as I have said, a day came when I began to cease noting the glories and the charms which the moon and the sun and the twilight wrought upon the river's face; another day came when I ceased altogether to note them. Then, if that sunset scene had been repeated, I would have looked upon it without rapture, and would have commented upon it inwardly after this fashion—This sun means that we are going to have wind to-morrow; that floating log means that the river is rising—small thanks to it; that slanting mark on the water refers to a bluff reef which is going to kill somebody's steamboat one of those nights if it keeps on stretching out like that; these tumbling 'boils' show a dissolving bar and a changing channel there; the lines and circles in the slick water over yonder are a warning that that execrable place is shoaling up dangerously; that silver streak in the shadow of the forest is the 'break' from a new snag, and he has located himself in the very best place he could have found to fish for steamboats; that tall dead tree, with a single living branch, is not going to last long, and, then, how is a body ever going to get through this blind place at night without the friendly old landmark?

"No, the romance and the beauty were all gone from the river. All the value any feature of it ever had for me now was the amount of usefulness it could furnish towards compassing the safe piloting of a steamboat. Since those days I have pitied doctors from my heart. What does the lovely flush in a beauty's cheek mean to the doctor but a 'break' that ripples above some deadly disease? Are not all her visible charms sown thick

with what are to him the signs and symbols of hidden decay? Does he ever see her beauty at all? or doesn't he simply view her professionally, and comment upon her unwholesome condition all to himself? And doesn't he sometimes wonder whether he has gained most or lost most by learning his trade?"

Mark Twain, whose real name is Samuel Langhorne Clemens, was born at Hannibal, Me., in 1835. He began life as a printer in his brother's office in his native town, after which he "learned the river" as a pilot on the Mississippi. It was while he was engaged in the latter profession that he borrowed the phrase, which has become world-known as his pseudonym, from the river customs of crying the soundings, "Mark one!" "Mark twain!" "Mark three!" etc., meaning one, two, or three fathoms. In 1861, when piloting fell into decay, he went to Nevada as secretary to his brother, who was acting as a kind of Government agent in connection with the silver mines there, and in that wild country he made his first attempts in journalism, and signed himself "Mark Twain." In his book, *Roughing It*, we get some idea of the kind of life which prevailed among the Nevada miners, and find some character-sketching scarcely less graphic and truthful than the Californian pictures from the masterful hand of Bret Harte. The comparison with the author of *The Luck of Roaring Camp*, is, I think, justified by a pen-and-ink "snapshot" like the following. Arkansas, the great mining bully, with revolvers in his belt, and bowie-knives in his boots, is always "suffering for a fight." He has been at the inn three days, and failed to institute a single row. On the fourth morning he gets drunk, and enters the bar bent on a quarrel.

Presently Johnson, the landlord, just comfortably social, comes in.

"'I reckon the Pennsylvania 'lection——' began the inoffensive host.

"Arkansas raised his finger impressively, and Johnson stopped. Arkansas rose unsteadily, and confronted him. Said he—

"'Wha—what do you know a—about Pennsylvania? Answer me that. Wha—what do you know about Pennsylvania?'

"'I was only goin' to say——'

"'You was only goin' to *say*. *You* was! *You* was only goin' to say——. *What* was you goin' to say? That's it! That's what I want to know. *I* want to know wha—what you (hic)—what you know 'bout Pennsylvania, since you're makin' yourself so d——d free. Answer me that!'

"'Mr. Arkansas, if you'd only let me——

"'Who's a-hindrin' you? Don't you insinuate nothin' agin me!—don't you do it. Don't you come in here bullyin' around, and cussin' and goin' on like a lunatic—don't you do it. 'Coz *I* won't *stand* it. If fight's what you want, out with it! I'm your man! *Out* with it!'

"Said Johnson, backing into a corner, Arkansas following menacingly—

"'Why, I never said nothing, Mr. Arkansas. You don't give a man a chance. I was only goin' to say that Pennsylvania was goin' to have an election next week—that was all—that was everything I was goin' to say. I wish I may never stir if it wasn't.'

"'Well, then, why didn't you say it? Wha—what did you come swellin' around that way for, and tryin' to raise trouble?'

"'Why, I didn't come swellin' around, Mr. Arkansas. I just——'

"I'm a liar, am I! Gr—great Cæsar's ghost——'

"With that Arkansas began to shoot, and the landlord to clamber over benches and men and every sort of obstacle in a frantic desire to escape."

In 1867 our author made his *début* as a comic writer with the publication of *The Jumping Frog and Other Sketches*, a slim volume, the fresh and convulsive humour of which has scarcely been excelled by anything he has written since. This was the first of his writing which made any appreciable stir in this country; but so happily did it hit every reader here that the British public wanted more from the same rich and ready source—a source from which there has subsequently sprung many of the most familiar books on our shelves, including *The Innocents Abroad*—which carried his name to the ends of the earth—*The Innocents at Home*, *A Tramp Abroad*, *The Prince and the Pauper*, *Life on the Mississippi*, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *The Stolen White Elephant*, *Huckleberry Finn*, and *A Yankee at the Court of King Arthur*, and other works.

On abandoning the mining fields after a few years of "roughing it," even although he was at one time the owner of a silver mine worth a million dollars, Mr. Clemens became connected with various newspapers in San Francisco. He visited the Sandwich Islands as the special correspondent of one of these, and on his return delivered his first lecture. In 1867 he embarked as a passenger in the "Quaker City" in her famous cruise to the Holy Land. It is his observations and experiences in Eastern Europe and Palestine whilst in the prosecution of this voyage which forms the subject-matter of his picturesque and rarely humorous work,

The Innocents Abroad, a book which one can read and enjoy again and again.

The year 1872 brought Mark Twain on his first visit to England, where he lectured without causing any particular stir, such as was created by Artemus Ward. In the same year he took unto himself a wife—a lady of great wealth—the daughter of Judge Langdon, of Elmira. His courtship, conducted with characteristic humour, is worth telling.

When Mark first met Miss Langdon he was not, of course, so distinguished as he is now. Her father, being a judge and a millionaire, doubtless expected "family" and social importance in his son-in-law. Mark, however, became interested in the daughter, and after a while proposed, but was rejected.

"Well," he said to the lady, "I didn't much believe you'd have me, but I thought I'd try."

After a while he "tried" again, with the same result, and then remarked, with his celebrated drawl, "I think a great deal more of you than if you'd said 'yes,' but it's hard to bear."

A third time he met with better fortune, and then came the most difficult part of his task—to address her father.

"Judge," he said to the dignified millionaire, "have you seen anything going on between Miss Lizzie and I?"

"What! what!" exclaimed the judge rather sharply, apparently not understanding the situation, yet doubtless getting a glimpse of it from the inquiry.

"Have you seen anything going on between Lizzie and I?" repeated the humourist.

"No, indeed," replied the magnate sternly; "no, sir, I have not."

"Well, look sharp and you will." drawled out the author of *The Innocents Abroad*, and without any more the suit was won.

For some time after his marriage he edited a daily journal, *The Buffalo Express*, but in course of time, on account of the success of his books, he relinquished his editorial work, and removed to Hartford, Connecticut, where he has since continued to make his home. He has as a near neighbour, in Hartford, Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, the authoress of the popular and immortal *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, now in her dotage, towards whom he exhibits quite a filial regard, and is honoured in return by the loving esteem of the aged writer. Mr. Clemens' works yearly bring him in large sums of money. Altogether he is estimated to have made not less than £80,000 by his pen. Consequently, he is at this moment perhaps the richest man of letters in America.*

Success, however, has not spoiled him in any way. He is still a hard worker, and if somewhat cold and offish in his attitude towards strangers, and those with whom he is only half acquainted, his heart is in the right place, and he enjoys the unmixed esteem of all who know him well.

To secure his presence at a public banquet and get him engaged in an after-dinner speech, just means that the gathering will be a splendid success. Indeed, some of his after-dinner speeches are among quite the best

* Since the above was written, the almost complete ruin of Mark Twain has been reported by the failure of the large publishing firm of Charles L. Webster & Co., in Boston, of which, for many years, he had been the chief partner. And at the present moment (December, 1895), he is engaged on a lecturing tour round the world, nobly striving to retrieve his lost estate.

known things that he has given to the world. His reply to the toast of his own health, on the occasion of his being entertained by the London Literary Club, many years ago, when he drew a huge manuscript from his pocket, and read with much apparent difficulty a long rigmarole which was largely made up of apologies for having nothing particular to say, because he had been so utterly taken by surprise, was whimsically funny in the extreme. But perhaps the best specimen of his humour in this way was manifested at the banquet which was given in Chicago to the late General Grant, when "Mark" was asked to respond to the toast of "The Babies."

"I like that," he said. "We have not all had the good fortune to be ladies. We have not all been generals, or poets, or statesmen, but when the toast-list works down to the babies, we stand on common ground, for we have all been babies. It is a shame that, for a thousand years, the world's banquets have utterly ignored the baby, as if he didn't amount to anything. If you will stop and think a minute, if you will go back fifty—or a hundred—years of your married life, and recontemplate your first baby, you will remember that he amounted to a great deal, and even something over. You soldiers all know that when that little fellow arrived at family headquarters, you had to hand in your resignation. He took entire command. He was not a commander who made allowance for time, distance, weather, or anything else. You had to execute his order, whether it was possible or not. There was only one pace in his manual of tactics, and that was double quick. . . . When he called for soothing syrup, did you venture to throw out any side remarks about certain services unbecoming an officer and a gentleman?

No; you got up and got it. When he ordered his pap bottle, and it wasn't warm, did you talk back? Not you. You went to work and warmed it. You even descended so far in your menial office as to take a suck at the warm, insipid stuff, just to see if it was all right —three-parts water to one of milk—a touch of sugar to modify the colic, and a drop of peppermint to kill those immortal hiccoughs.

"The idea that a baby doesn't amount to anything! One baby can furnish more business than you and your whole interior department can attend to. He is enterprising, irrepressible, brimful of lawless activities. Do what you will you can't make him stay on the reservation. Sufficient unto the day is one baby. As long as you are in your right mind don't you ever pray for twins. . . Fifty years from now our present schooner of State will be grown into a political leviathan, and the cradle babies of to-day will be on deck. Let them be well trained, for we are going to leave a big contract on their hands. Among the three or four million cradles now rocking in the land are some which this nation would preserve for ages as sacred things, if we could know which ones they are. Future commanders, astronomers, historians, presidents, are now lying in those cradles. And in one more cradle somewhere under the flag the illustrious commander-in-chief of the American armies is so little burdened with his approaching grandeur and responsibilities as to be giving his whole strategic mind at this moment to trying to find out some way to get his big toe into his mouth, an achievement which, meaning no disrespect, the illustrious guest of this evening turned his attention to some fifty-six years ago; and if the child is but the prophecy of the man, there are mighty few who will doubt that he succeeded."

The pertinacity—impertinence is, perhaps, a better name for it—of the species of American newspaper reporter known as the "interviewer" is notorious, even on this side of the Atlantic, where imitations of him are gradually being developed. But Mark Twain's method of dealing with such may be commended to all and sundry who have no sympathy with the practice, and may chance to have their privacy encroached upon at any time. Mark thus relates the interview :—

The nervous, dapper, pert young man took the chair I offered him, and said he was connected with the *Daily Thunderstorm*, and added—

Hoping it's no harm, I've come to interview you. Will you let me ask you certain questions calculated to bring out the salient points of your public and private history ?

Oh, with pleasure—with pleasure. I have a very bad memory, but I hope you will not mind that. That is to say, it is an irregular memory—singularly irregular. Sometimes it goes in a gallop, and then again it will be as much as a fortnight passing a given point. This is a great grief to me.

Oh, it is no matter, so you will try to do the best you can.

I will. I will put my whole mind on it.

Thanks. Are you ready to begin ?

Ready.

Q.—How old are you ?

A.—Nineteen, in June.

Q.—Indeed ! I would have taken you to be thirty-five or six. Where were you born ?

A.—In Missouri.

Q.—When did you begin to write ?

A.—In 1836.

Q.—Why, how could that be, if you are only nineteen now?

A.—I don't know. It does seem curious somehow.

Q.—It does indeed. Whom do you consider the most remarkable man you ever met?

A.—Aaron Burr.

Q.—But you never could have met Aaron Burr, if you are only nineteen years——

A.—Now, if you know more about me than I do, what do you ask me for?

Q.—Well, it was only a suggestion; nothing more. How did you happen to meet Burr?

A.—Well, I happened to be at his funeral one day, and he asked me to make less noise, and——

Q.—But, good heavens! if you were at his funeral, he must have been dead; and if he was dead, how could he care whether you made a noise or not?

A.—I don't know. He was always a particular kind of man that way.

Q.—Still, I don't understand it at all. You say he spoke to you, and that he was dead.

A.—I didn't say he was dead.

Q.—But wasn't he dead?

A.—Well, some said he was, some said he wasn't.

Q.—What did you think?

A.—Oh, it was none of my business! It wasn't any of my funeral.

Q.—Did you——. However, we can never get this matter straight. Let me ask about something else. What was the date of your birth?

A.—Monday, October 31, 1693.

Q.—What? Impossible! That would make you a hundred and eighty years old. How do you account for that?

A.—I don't account for it at all.

Q.—But you said at first you were only nineteen, and now you make yourself out to be one hundred and eighty. It is an awful discrepancy.

A.—Why, have you noticed that? (Shaking hands). Many a time it has seemed to me like a discrepancy, but somehow I couldn't make up my mind. How quick you notice a thing!

Q.—Thank you for the compliment, as far as it goes. Had you, or have you, any brothers and sisters?

A.—Eh! I—I—I think so—yes—but I don't remember.

Q.—Well, that is the most extraordinary statement I ever heard!

A.—Why, what makes you think that?

Q.—How could I think otherwise? Why, look here! Who is this a picture of on the wall? Isn't that a brother of yours?

A.—Oh! yes, yes, yes! Now you remind me of it; that *was* a brother of mine. That's William—*Bill* we called him. Poor old Bill!

Q.—Why? Is he dead then?

A.—Ah! well, I suppose so. We never could tell. There was a great mystery about it.

Q.—That is sad, very sad. He disappeared then?

A.—Well, yes, in a sort of general way. We buried him.

Q.—*Buried* him? *Buried* him, without knowing whether he was dead or not?

A.—Oh, no! Not that. He was dead enough.

Q.—Well, I confess that I can't understand this. If you buried him, and you knew he was dead——

A.—No! no! we only thought he was.

Q.—Oh, I see! He came to life again?

A.—I bet he didn't.

Q.—Well, I never heard anything like this. *Somebody* was dead. *Somebody* was buried. Now, where was the mystery?

A.—Ah! that's just it! That's it exactly. You see we were twins—defunct and I—and we got mixed in the bath-tub when we were only two weeks old, and one of us was drowned. But we didn't know which. Some think it was Bill. Some think it was me.

Q.—Well, that *is* remarkable. What do *you* think?

A.—Goodness knows! I would give whole worlds to know. This solemn, this awful mystery has cast a gloom over my whole life. But I will tell you a secret now, which I never have revealed to any creature before. One of us had a peculiar mark—a large mole on the back of his left hand; that was *me*. *That child was the one that was drowned!*

Q.—Very well, then, I don't see that there is any mystery about it, after all.

A.—You don't? Well, *I* do. Anyway, I don't see how they could ever have been such a blundering lot as to go and bury the wrong child. But, 'sh!—don't mention it where the family can hear of it. Heaven knows they have heart-breaking troubles enough without adding this.

Q.—Well, I believe I have got material enough for the present, and I am very much obliged to you for the pains you have taken. But I was a good deal interested in that account of Aaron Burr's funeral. Would you mind telling me what particular circumstance it was that made you think Burr was such a remarkable man?

A.—Oh! it was a mere trifle! Not one man in fifty would have noticed it at all. When the sermon was over, and the procession all ready to start for the ceme-

tery, and the body all arranged nice in the hearse, he said he wanted to take a last look at the scenery, and so he *got up and rode with the driver.*

Then the young man reverently withdrew.

That is inimitable in its way, but a more characteristic example of the author's humour is discovered in

Jim Blaine's Account of His Grandfather's Old Ram,

which is here slightly abridged from *Roughing It.*

"Every now and then the boys used to tell me I ought to get Jim Blaine to tell me the stirring story of his grandfather's old ram, but they always added that I must not mention the matter unless Jim was drunk at the time—just comfortably and socially drunk. They kept this up until my curiosity was on the rack to hear the story. I got to hunting Blaine, but it was of no use, the boys always found fault with his condition; he was often moderately, but never satisfactorily drunk. I never watched a man's condition with such absorbing interest, such anxious solicitude; I never so pined to see a man uncompromisingly drunk before. At last, one evening I hurried to his cabin, for I learned that this time his situation was such that even the most fastidious could find no fault with it, he was tranquilly, serenely, symmetrically drunk—not a hiccup to mar his voice, not a cloud upon his brain thick enough to obscure his memory. As I entered he was sitting upon an empty powder keg, with a clay pipe in one hand and the other raised to command silence. His face was round, red, and very serious; his throat was bare and his hair tumbled; in general appearance and costume he was a stalwart miner of the period. On the pine table stood a

candle, and its dim light revealed 'the boys' sitting here and there on bunks, candle boxes, powder kegs, etc. They said—

"'Sh—! Don't speak—he's going to commence.'

"I found a seat at once and Blaine said:—'I don't recken them times will ever come again. There never was a bullier old ram than what he was. Grandfather fetched him from Illinois—got him of a man by the name of Yates—Bill Yates—maybe you might have heard of him; his father was a deacon Baptist—and he was a rustler, too; a man had to get up rather early to get the start of old Thankful Yates. It was him that put the Greens up to jining teams with my grandfather when he moved west. Seth Green was prob'ly the pick of the flock, he married a Wilkinson—Sarah Wilkinson—good creature she was—one of the likeliest heifers that was ever raised in old Stoddart: everybody said that knowed her she could heft a barrel of flour as easy as I can flirt a flapjack. And spin? Don't mention it! Independent? Humple! When Sile Hawkins come a browsing around her, she let him know that for all his tin he couldn't trot in harness alongside of her. You see, Sile Hawkins, was—no, it wasn't Sile Hawkins, after all—it was a galoot by the name of Filkins. I disremember his first name; but he was a stump. Came into prayer meeting drunk one night, hooraying for Nixon, because he thought it was a primary; and old Deacon Ferguson up and scooted him through the window, and he lit on old Miss Jefferson's head, poor old lily. She was a good soul, had a glass eye, and used to lend it to old Miss Wagner, that hadn't any, to receive company in; it wasn't big enough, and when Miss Wagner warn't noticing it would git twisted around in the sockit, and look up, maybe, or out to one

side, and every which way, while tother one was looking as straight ahead as a spyglass. Grown people didn't mind it, but it most always made the children cry, it was so sort of scary. She tried packing it in with raw cotton, but it wouldn't work—somehow the cotton would get loose and stick out, and look so kind of awful that the children couldn't stand it noway. She was always dropping it out, and turning up her old dead light on the company empty, and making them uncomfortable, becaz she never could tell when it hopped out, being blind on that side, you see. So somebody would have to hunch her and say, 'Your game eye has fetch'd loose, Miss Wagner, dear'—and then all of them would have to sit and wait till she jammed it in again—wrong side before, as a general thing, and green as a bird's egg, being a bashful creatur, and easy sot back before company. But being wrong side before wasn't much difference, anyway, becaz her own eye was sky blue, and the glass one was yaller on the front side. So whichever way she turned it didn't match nohow. Old Miss Wagner was considerable on the borrow, she was. When she had a quilting, or Dorcas S'iety at her house, she generally borrowed Miss Higgins' wooden leg to stump around on; it was considerable shorter than her own pin, but much she minded that. She said she couldn't abide crutches when she had company, becaz they were so slow; said when she had company and things had to be done she wanted to get up and hump herself. She was as bald as a pig, and so she used to borrow Miss Jacops's wig. Miss Jacops was the coffin-peddler's wife. A rather old buzzard he was, that used to go roosting around, where people was sick, waiting for 'em; and there that old rip would sit all day in the shade on a coffin that he judged would fit the can'idate;

and if it was a slow customer, and kind of uncertain, he'd fetch his rations and a blanket along, and sleep in the coffin nights. He was anchored out that way in frosty weather for about three weeks once before old Robbin's place, waiting for him, and after that for as much as two years Jacops was not on speaking terms with the old man, on account of his disappointing him. He got one of his feet froze, and lost money too, becaz old Robbins took a favourable turn and got well. It was always an aggrivation to Jacops the way that miserable old thing acted. He moved back to Indiany pretty soon—went to Wellsville.

"Wellsville was the place the Hogadorns was from. Mighty fine family. Old Maryland stock. Old Squire Hogadorn could carry around more mixed licker and cuss better than most any man I ever see. His second wife was the Widder Billings, she that was Becky Martin; her dam was Deacon Dunlap's first wife. Her oldest child, Maria, married a missionary and died in grace—et up by the savages. They et *him* too, poor feller—biled him. It warn't the custom, so they say, but they explained to friends of his'n that went down there to bring away his things that they'd tried missionaries every other way, and never could get any good of 'em; and so it annoyed all his relations to find out that that man's life was fooled away just out of a dern'd experiment, so to speak. But, mind you, there ain't anything ever reely lost; everything that people can't understand and don't see the reason of does good, if you only hold on and give it a fair shake. Providence don't fire no blank ca'tridges, boys. That there missionary's substance, unbeknowns to himself, actu'ly converted every last one of them heathens that took a chance at the barbacue. Nothing ever fetched them

but that. Don't tell *me* it was an accident that he was biled. There ain't no such thing as an accident. When my Uncle Lem was leaning up against a scaffolding once, sick, or drunk, or suthin, an Irishman with a hod full of bricks fell on him out of the third storey, and broke the old man's back in two places. People said it was an accident. Much accident there was about that. He didn't know what he was there for, but he was there for a good object. If he hadn't been there the Irishman would have been killed. Nobody can ever make me believe anything different from that. Uncle Lem's dog was there—why didn't the Irishman fall on the dog? Becuz the dog would have seen him a-coming and stood from under. That's the reason the dog weren't appinted. A dog can't be depended upon to carry out a special providence. Mark my words, it was a put-up thing. Accidents don't happen, boys. Uncle Lem's dog—I wish you could a seen that dog. He was a reg'lar shepherd—or rather he was part bull and part shepherd—splendid animal—belonged to Parson Hagar before Uncle Lem got him. Parson Hagar belonged to the Western Reserve Hagars; prime family; his mother was a Watson; one of his sisters married a Wheeler; they settled in Morgan County, and he got nipped by the machinery in a carpet factory and went through in less than a quarter of a minute. His widder bought the piece of carpet that had his remains wove in, and the people come a hundred miles to attend the funeral. There was fourteen yards in the piece. She wouldn't let them roll him up, but planted him just so—full length. The church was middling small where they preached the funeral, and they had to let one end of the coffin stick out of the window. They didn't bury him—they planted one end and let him stand up, same

as a monument, and they nailed a sign on it, and put—put on—put on it—sacred to—the memory—of—of fourteen y-a-r-d-s—of three-ply-car-pit—containing all that was m-o-r-t-a-l—of—W i-l-l-i-a-m W-h-e-e-l-e-r——.'

"Jim Blaine had been growing gradually drowsy and drowsier—his head nodded once, twice, three times,—dropped peacefully upon his breast, and he fell tranquilly asleep. The tears were running down the boys' cheeks—they were suffocating with suppressed laughter, and had been from the start, though I had not noticed it. I perceived that I was sold, and learned then that Jim Blaine's peculiarity was that whenever he reached a certain stage of intoxication no human power could keep him from setting out with impressive unction to tell about a wonderful adventure that he had once had with his grandfather's old ram, and the mention of the ram in the first sentence was as far as any man had ever heard him get concerning it. He always maundered off interminably from one thing to another till the whisky got the best of him, and he fell asleep. What the thing was that happened to him with his grandfather's old ram is a dark mystery to this day, for nobody has ever yet found out."

Mark Twain's humorous pen never surpassed that, unless it may have been in his account of the interview between Scotty Briggs and the Parson, a slang story of the Nevada mines, which I have taken the liberty of condensing somewhat, as I did also the sketch of Jim Wheeler, in order to find space for both.

Scotty Briggs and the Parson.

There was a grand time over Buck Fanshaw when he died. He was a representative citizen. He had "killed

his man"—not in his own quarrel, it is true, but in defence of a stranger unfairly beset by numbers. He had kept a sumptuous saloon, had held a high position in the fire department, and been a very Warwick in politics.

Prodigious preparations were made for his funeral. All the vehicles in town were hired, all the saloons put in mourning, all the municipal and fire company flags hung at half-mast, and all the firemen ordered to muster in uniform, and bring their machines duly draped in black.

After the inquest, a meeting of the short-haired brotherhood was held, for nothing can be done on the Pacific coast without a public meeting, and an expression of sentiment. Regretful resolutions were passed, and various committees appointed, among others, a committee of one was deputed to call on the minister, a fragile, gentle, spiritual new fledgling from an eastern theological seminary, and as yet unacquainted with the ways of the mines. The committeeman, "Scotty" Briggs, made his visit, and in after days it was worth something to hear the minister tell about it. Scotty was a stalwart rough, whose customary suit, when on weighty official business, like committee work, was a fire helmet, flaming red flannel shirt, patent leather belt with spanner and revolver attached, coat hung over arm, and pants stuffed into boot tops. He formed something of a contrast to the pale theological student. It is fair to say of Scotty, however, in passing, that he had a warm heart and a strong love for his friends, and never entered into a quarrel when he could reasonably keep out of it. Indeed, it was commonly said that whenever one of Scotty's fights was investigated, it always turned out that it had originally been no affair

of his, but that out of a native goodheartedness he had dropped in of his own accord to help the man who was getting the worst of it. He and Buck Fanshaw were bosom friends for years, and had often taken adventurous "pot-luck" together. On one occasion they had thrown off their coats and taken the weaker side in a fight among strangers, and after gaining a hard-earned victory, turned and found that the men they were helping had deserted early, and not only that, but had stolen their coats and made off with them. But to return to Scotty's visit to the minister. He was on a sorrowful mission now, and his face was the picture of woe. Being admitted to the presence, he sat down before the clergyman, placed his fire-hat on an unfinished manuscript sermon under the minister's nose, took from it a red silk handkerchief, wiped his brow, and heaved a sigh of dismal impressiveness, explanatory of his business. He choked and even shed tears; but with an effort he mustered his voice and said in lugubrious tones:

"Are you the duck that runs the gospel-mill next door?"

"Am I the——pardon me, I believe I did not understand?"

With another sigh and a half sob, Scotty rejoined:

"Why, you see, we are in a bit of trouble, and the boys thought maybe you would give us a lift, if we'd tackle you—that is if I've got the rights of it, and you are the head clerk of the doxology-works next door."

"I am the shepherd in charge of the flock whose fold is next door."

"The which?"

"The spiritual adviser of the little company of believers whose sanctuary adjoins these premises."

Scotty scratched his head, reflected a moment, and then said :

"You ruther hold over me, pard. I reckon I can't call that hand. Ante and pass the buck."

"I beg pardon. What did I understand you to say?"

"Well, you've rather got the bulge on me. Or, may-be, we've both got the bulge, somehow. You don't smoke me and I don't smoke you. You see, one of the boys has passed in his checks, and we want to give him a good send off; and so the thing I am on now is to roust out somebody to jerk a little chin-music for us, and waltz him through handsome."

"My friend, I seem to grow more and more bewildered. Your observations are wholly incomprehensible to me. Cannot you simplify them in some way? At first I thought I understood you, but I grope now. Would it not expedite matters if you restricted yourself to categorical statements of fact, unencumbered with obstructing accumulations of metaphor and allegory?"

Another pause, and more reflection. Then said Scotty :

"I'll have to pass, I judge."

"How?"

"You've raised me out, pard."

"I still fail to catch your meaning."

"Why, that last lead of yourn is too many for me—that's the idea. I can't neither trump nor follow suit."

The clergyman sat back in his chair perplexed. Scotty leaned his head on his hand and gave himself up to thought. Presently his face came up, sorrowful but confident.

"I've got it now, so's you can savvy. What we want is a gospel-sharp. See?"

"A what?"

"Gospel-sharp. Parson."

"Oh! Why did you not say so before? I am a clergyman—a parson."

"Now you talk! You see my blind and straddle it like a man. Put it there!"

"Now we're all right, pard. Let's start afresh. Don't you mind my snuffling a little -because we're in a power of trouble. You see one of the boys has gone up the flume——"

"Gone where?"

"Up the flume—throwed up the sponge, you understand."

"Thrown up the sponge?"

"Yes; kicked the bucket——"

"Ah! has departed to that mysterious country from whose bourne no traveller returns."

"Return! I reckon not. Why, pard, he's dead!"

"Yes; I understand."

"Oh, you do? Well, I thought maybe you might be getting tangled some more. Yes, you see, he's dead again——"

"Again? Why, has he ever been dead before?"

"Dead before? No! Do you reckon a man has got as many lives as a cat? But, you bet, he's awful dead now, poor old boy, and I wish I'd never seen this day; I don't want no better friend than Buck Fanshaw. I knowed him by the back; and when I know a man and like him, I freeze to him—you hear me. Take him all round, pard, there never was a bullier man in the mines. No man ever knowed Buck Fanshaw to go back on a friend. But it's all up, you know, it's all up. It ain't no use. They've scooped him."

"Scooped him?"

"Yes; death has. Well, well, well, we've got to give him up. Yes, indeed. It's a kind of a hard world, after all, ain't it? But, pard, he was a rustler! You ought to see him get started once. He was a bully boy with a glass eye! Just spit in his face, and give him room according to his strength, and it was just beautiful to see him peel and go in. He was the worst son of a thief that ever drawed breath. Pard, he was on it! He was on it bigger than an Injun!"

"On it! On what?"

"On the shoot. On the shoulder. On the fight, you understand. He did'nt give a continental for anybody. But we've got to give him up. There ain't any getting around that, I don't reckon. Now, if we can get you to help plant him——"

"Preach the funeral discourse? Assist at the obsequies?"

"Obs'quies is good. Yes, that's it; that's our little game. We are going to get the thing up regardless, you know. He was always nifty himself, and so you bet his funeral ain't going to be no slouch—solid silver door-plate on his coffin, six plumes on the hearse, and a nigger on the box in a biled shirt and a plug hat—how's that for high? And we'll take care of you, pard. We'll fix you all right. There'll be a kerridge for you; and whatever you want you just scape out, and we'll tend to it. We've got a shebang fixed up for you to stand behind in No. 1's house, and don't you be afraid. Just go in and toot your horn, if you don't sell a clam. Put Buck through as bully as you can, pard, for anybody that knowed him will tell you that he was one of the whitest men that was ever in the mines. You can't draw it too strong. He never could bear to see things going wrong. He's done more to make this town quiet

and peaceable than any man in it. I've seen him lick four Greasers in eleven minutes, myself. If a thing wanted regulating, he wasn't a man to go browsing around after somebody to do it, but he would prance in and regulate it himself. He warn't a Catholic. Scasely. He was down on 'em. His word was, 'No Irish need apply.' But it didn't make no difference about that, when it came down to what a man's rights was—and so, when some roughs jumped the Catholic bone-yard and started in to stake town lots in it, he went for 'em! And he cleaned 'em, too! I was there, pard, and seen it myself."

"That was very well, indeed—at least the impulse was—whether the act was strictly defensible or not. Had deceased any religious convictions? That is to say, did he feel a dependence upon or acknowledge allegiance to——"

"There—I see that! Don't put up another chip till I look at my hand. A good man, say you? It ain't no name for it. He was the best man that ever—— Pard, you would have doted on that man. He could lam any galoot of his inches in America. It was him that put down the riot last election before it got a start; and everybody said that he was the only man that could have done it. He waltzed in with a spanner in one hand and a trumpet in the other, and sent fourteen men home on a shutter in less than three minutes. He had that riot all broke up and prevented nice before anybody ever got a chance to strike a blow. He was always for peace, and he would have peace—he could not stand disturbances. Pard, he is a great loss to this town. It would please the boys if you could chip in something like that and do him justice. He was the bulliest man in the mountains, pard! He could run

faster, jump higher, hit harder, and hold more tangle-foot whisky without spilling it than any man in the seventeen counties. Put that in, pard; it'll please the boys more than anything you could say. And you can say, pard, that he never shook his mother."

"Never shook his mother?"

"That's it; any of the boys will tell you so."

"Well, but why should he shake her?"

"That's what I say—but some people does."

"Not people of any repute?"

"Well, some that averages pretty so—so."

"In my opinion, the man that would offer personal violence to his own mother, ought to——"

"Cheese it, pard; you've banked your ball clean outside the string. What I was a-drivin' at was that he never throwed off on his mother, don't you see? He give her a house to live in, and town lots, and plenty of money; and he looked after her and took care of her all the time; and when she was down with the small-pox, I'm darned if he didn't set up nights and nuss her himself! Beg your pardon for saying it, but it hopped out too quick for yours truly. You've treated me like a gentleman, pard, and I ain't the man to hurt your feelings intentional. I think you're white. I think you're a square man, pard. I like you, and I'll lick any man that don't. I'll lick him till he can't tell himself from a last year's corpse! Put it there!"

Many delightsome examples of Mark Twain's broad and sparkling humour might yet be deduced; but if this paper serves adequately its main purpose it will provoke readers to a full and free perusal of the author's books, where they will discover the flowers for themselves and enjoy them all the more in their original setting in the body of his well written text.

I shall only further say here, long live Mark Twain, for he is doing more by his pen to make men healthy and happy than a whole army of doctors with scalpels and medicine chests.

JOSH BILLINGS.

"TAKE a little of Martin Farquhar Tupper and a little of Artemus Ward, knead them together, and you may make something which approaches to a Josh Billings."

So says the showman's showman, Mr. E. P. Hingston, and the definition is not at all inapt; for Josh is a philosopher as well as a humourist—a Jaques and a Touchstone in one and the same person. His philosophy is always sound, too, and never wearisome, which, by-the-bye, is more than might be said of Martin Tupper. And he differs from Artemus Ward in this, that he is a comic essayist rather than a comic story writer.

Story! bless you, like the needy knife-grinder, he has none to tell. He could not tell it well if he had; his genius does not spread out in that fashion. He is a writer of comic aphorisms—a Solomon in cap and bells. What a success he would have been as a circus clown we can only fancy; what an improvement on the ordinary ring comedian we can easily imagine. The average age of a circus clown has been computed at about forty years, but the average age of a circus joke

—it is immeasurable—it had no beginning, and apparently will have no end. With Josh Billings in the ring something new—and not only new but good—would have appeared every night—sayings over which the gods might have laughed their fill and not exhausted the usefulness of, since the humorous rind of them having served the turn of the circus, the kernels could be carried away and provide food for reflection at home. For herein lies the peculiar value of nearly everything that Josh Billings has written. Immensely funny as it all is, there is invariably a higher purpose peeping out from among his quaint fancies and odd expressions.

Let us cull a few examples :—

"Truth is stranger than fiction—that is, to some folks."

"If you want to get a sure crop, and a big yield for the seed, sow wild oats."

"Honesty is the best policy—but don't take my word for it, try it."

"Give the devil his due, but be very careful that there ain't much due him."

"Gray hairs are honourable, but I know of a great many gray heads that the devil will keep under a glass case, to show the curious in these matters."

"Rum is good in its place, and hell is the place for it."

"God save the fools! and don't let them run out, for if it warn't for them, wise men couldn't get a living."

"The road to ruin is always kept in good repair, and the travellers pay the expense of it."

"There is no better compliment to virtue than this, that vice always concocts her great plans in the name of virtue."

"The devil is the father of lies, but he neglected to patent the idea, and the business now suffers from competition."

"To train up a child in the way he should go—travel that way yourself."

"Man was created a little lower than the angels, and has been getting a little lower ever since."

"The chains of slavery are none the less galling for being made of gold."

"The love that a man gains by flattery is worth just about as much as the flattery is."

"Confess your sins to the Lord, and you will be forgiven—confess them to men, and you will be laughed at."

"Prosperity makes us suspicious of each other, while adversity makes us trust in each other. The only way that I can account for this is that in prosperity we have something to lose, while in adversity we have everything to gain."

"Poverty has no friends—not even among paupers."

"When I see a man of shallow understanding extravagantly clothed, I always feel sorry—for the clothes."

"I am a poor man, but I have this consolation—I am poor by accident, not by design."

"Money is like promises, easier made than kept."

"A long face is no more an indication of religion than a paper collar is of a white shirt."

"It is dreadful easy to be a fool—a man can be one and not know it."

"Rise early, work hard and late, live on what you can't sell, give nothing away, and if you don't die rich and go to the devil, you may sue me for damages."

"Marrying for love may be a little risky, but it is so honest that God cannot help but smile on it."

It was by short, sharp, shiny remarks like these, printed in the corners of American newspapers, with the author's pen-name attached, that Josh Billings first became popular. First of all, I think, his hand was seen in the columns of the *Philadelphia Sunday Dispatch*, from whence his quaint sayings were copied into every paper in the States, and, in course of time, found their way to Britain, and reappeared in nearly all the home journals. It is a curious fact, too—I might almost say a lamentable one—that his wittiest and wisest sayings passed almost unheeded until, following Artemus Ward's example, he began a systematic course of phonetic and eccentric spelling. A contemptible sort of trick, though, no doubt, justified to some extent here by its success. In writing out the foregoing examples of his style, I have robbed the remarks of their cacography, and I think every sane reader will admit that their effect is not lowered but rather heightened by the process. However, that by the way.

In course of time people began to ask, "Who is Josh Billings?" and ultimately it leaked out that his real name was Shaw—Henry W. Shaw—and that he was an auctioneer resident in, and belonging to, Poughkeepsie.

He was born, Mark Twain tells us, at Lanesborough, Massachusetts, in 1818, and came of a family of politicians, his father and grandfather having both been in Congress. In the early years of his life Mr. Shaw migrated to the West, and established himself first as a farmer and latterly as an auctioneer at Poughkeepsie. He did not commence writing for the press until he was about forty-five years old; but his success was very

rapid. His "Essa on the Muel" brought him into prominent notice as a humourist, and he was ferreted out in his Poughkeepsie home, and urgently solicited to accept engagements as a public lecturer. He tried the experiment in the Athenæums and Lyceums of his own State, and succeeded beyond his own expectations. He followed up this new calling, and soon became recognised as an established, legitimate, and lucrative "show," having his proper value in the market, and his assigned status on the rostrum. He travelled over the entire Union with his lecture entitled "The Devil's Putty and Varnish," and made money thereby more rapidly than ever he had done in his capacity as farmer or auctioneer, and many good stories were told of him. Hingston relates the following :—

Being in Washington, and asked by a politician there relative to his opinion of Mr. Thaddeus Stevens, of Pennsylvania, who was then opposing President Johnson very hotly in the Government, and who figured as a thoroughly ultra-Radical, Mr. Shaw replied :—"Give me leave to recite a little dream I had last night. I fancied that I was in the lower regions, and while engaged in conversation with the proprietor, an imp announced that Mr. Stevens was at the door desiring admission. Old Nick promptly and emphatically refused him entrance, on the ground that he would be continually disturbing the peace and order of the place. The imp soon returned, saying that Thaddeus insisted on coming in, declaring that he had no other place to go to. After much deliberation, Old Nick's face suddenly brightened with a new idea, and he exclaimed, 'I've got it. Tell the janitor to give him six bushels of brimstone and a box of matches, and let him go and start a little place of his own.'"

Mr. Shaw's first noteworthy success in the humorous line, I have said, was his "Essa on the Muel." His last astonishing success in the same way was achieved in 1870, when he started the *Farmer's Alminax*. From the latter he netted 30,000 dollars within ten years. One of the most popular of popular lecturers, the natural effect of his platform work was the advertising of his writings, which at first had spread his name and prepared the country for his lectures, and so, at his death, which occurred at Monterey, California, in October, 1885, Mr. Shaw was reckoned to be worth about 100,000 dollars, much of which had been gained writing at 100 dollars a week for a New York story paper.

Besides the "Alminax"—which was really a travesty on the *Old Farmers' Almanac* published for many years by the Thomas family in New York—he wrote, and issued in book form, *Josh Billings: his Book*, *Josh Billings on Ice*, *Everybody's Friend*, *Josh Billings' Spice Box*, and a volume of his complete works.

In appearance the genial "Josh," we are told, was more like a country farmer than the typical man of letters, or the professed wit and public lecturer on playful subjects. He was rather under the middle height, and of spare build, with sharp features, and grey hair. Of a social disposition, he was the very soul of a little company, which he could keep in a continual paroxysm of laughter, and so prove to them that he did not require to hoard all his good things for the platform.

Very little of the material of Josh's lectures has been preserved for us, but from the few curtailed extracts that have found their way into "His Book," we may reasonably infer that they consisted mainly of disjointed humorous and moral reflections on men and things in general. And with such a flow of humorous wit and

satire as he could bring to bear on the humbug, pretension and folly around him, we can well imagine how effective and entertaining his platform performances would be. It has been said of him by one of the critics of his own land that his wit had no edge to betray a malicious motive, but was rather a Feejee club grotesquely carved and painted, that made those who felt it grin while they winced. But he had been no humorous satirist at all unless this might be said of him. It is the proper function of the humourist to amuse, but if he is to be humourist and satirist in one, his mission must be to make all whom he kills die with a smile on their face. That Josh Billings could do this, a few samples of his "Devil's Putty and Varnish" will satisfactorily show.

"When a man comes to the conclusion," says he, "that he would like to kill somebody at thirty paces, he imagines that he has been wronged, and sends his best friend a challenge to fight a duel; they meet, and an elegant murder is committed; the cracks in this transaction are puttied up, and then varnished over by being called 'an affair of honour.' When a man robs a Savings Bank, or goes to Europe on the last steamer with the stolen receipts of a Sanitary Committee in his pocket, a committee of investigation are got together to examine the state of affairs, and unanimously report 'a discrepancy in his accounts.'

"Two young men hire a horse and buggy at a livery stable and go into the country on Sunday. They stop at the first tavern they meet, and invest in some ardent spirits. The more they histe in the more they drive, till by and by a devilish bridge tips them over into a devilish gutter that somebody else has left by the side

of the road, and they are killed, including the horse and buggy. This is called 'a fatal accident.'

"A man and his wife are living in the middle of joy and consolation. They are surrounded on all sides by a young and interesting family. Their bread is cut thin and buttered on both sides and the edges, but the destroyer enters the family. The wife wants a new silk gown, the man says he 'be blow'd if she does.' The wife says she 'be blow'd if she don't.' One word brings on another till they fight; both of them lose all the hair in their head, and two full sets of false teeth. The thing ends in a divorce. The man runs away to Australia by the overland route. The woman marries a circus rider at forty dollars a month. The children are adopted by some Sunday school, and are brought up on homœopathy. This furnishes a column and a half in the newspapers, under the head of 'Disturbance of the Married Relation.'

"The devil furnishes putty and varnish free of expense to hide the frauds and guilt of men."

But again about his "Essa on the Muel." He certainly never excelled that; and it is due to him that we should copy the piece almost in full:—

"The mule is haf hoss and haf jackass, and then kums tu a full stop, natur diskovering her mistake. Tha weigh more accordin tu their heft than enny other creeture, except a crowbar. Tha kant heer enny quicker nor further than the hoss, yet their ears are big enuff fur snow-shoes. You kan trust them with enny one whose life aint worth more than the mule's. The only way tu keep them into a paster is tu turn them into a medder jineing and let them jump out. Tha are reddy for use jest as soon as tha will do tu abuse. Tha aint got enny friends, and will live on huckelberry brush,

with an akasional chance at Kanada thissels. Tha are a modern invention. Tha sell fur more money than enny other domestic animil. You kant tell their age by looking into their mouth enny more than you could a Mexican cannon.

"Tha never have no disease that a good club won't heal. If tha ever die tha must come right to life agin, fur I never herd nobody say 'ded mule.' Tha are like some men, very korrupt at heart. I've known them to be good mules fur six month, just to get a good chance to kick somebody. I never owned one, nor never mean to, unless there is a United States law passed requiring it. The only reason why tha are pashant is because they are ashamed of themselves. I have seen educated mules in a circus. Tha could kick and bite tremenjis. . . . Enny man who is willing to drive a mule ought to be exempt by law from running for the legislatur. Tha are the strongest creeters on arth, and heaviest according tu their size. I herd of one who fell oph from the tow-path of the Eri canawl, and sunk as soon as he touched bottom, but he kept on towing the boat tu the next stashun, breathing through his ears, which was out of the water about two feet six inches. I didn't see this did, but Bill Harding told me of it, and I never knew an auctioneer to lie unless it was absolutely convenient."

His "Essa on Pigs," if less witty than the above, has a touch of poetry about it which is very charming. Take it, with the foregoing, in the author's own peculiar orthography:—

"Az the white roze wakens into buty, so duz the white pig cum tew gladden uz. His earz are like the lilac leaf, played upon bi the young zepharz at eventide, hiz silkiness is the wool of buty, and hiz figger iz

the outline ov lovelaness. His food iz white nectar, drawn from the full fountain of effecshun. He waxes fatter and more silky evra da, and hangs from the buzzum of hiz muther like an image ov alabastur. He laffeth at forms and curleth his tale still cluser, az hiz feast goeth on, then he rizeth with gladness, and wandreth with his kindred beside the still waters.

"His brothers and sisters are az like him az the flakes ov snow, and all the day long, amung the red klover and beneath the white thorn, he maketh hiz joy and leadeth a life arkadian. His words are low musik, and his language the untutored freshnes of natur. His pastime iz the history ov innersence, and his lezzure is eleganse. He walketh where the grase leadeth, and gambles tew the dallianse ov dewy fragranse. He gathreth straws in hiz mouth, and hasteth awa on errants of gladness. He listeneth tew the reproof of his parent; his ackshuns are the laws of perliteness, and his logick is the power ov instinkt. Hiz datime iz pease, and his evening gentle forgitfulness.

"Az he taketh on years he loveth cool plases, and delveth in liquids, and stirreth the arth tew a fatness, and painteth hisself in dark cullers a refluge from flize and the torments ov life. He forgeteth hiz parent and bekumeth hiz own master, and larneth the mistery of food, and groweth hugely. Men gaze at hiz porkyness, and kount his valu bi pounds, and la in wate for him, and sacrifise him, and give hiz flesh salt for safety. . . This is pig life."

It would be manifestly unfair to the creator of Josh Billings, as a man and a husband, a father and a brother, not to quote his "First Baby," for in this little essay, sure enough, we find the very poetry of

pathos, and the very essence of sweet and innocent humour:—

"The first baby has become one of the fixed stars of life; and ever since the first one was born on the wrong side of the Garden of Eden down to the little stranger of yesterday, they have never failed to be a budget of much joy—an event of much gladness. To wake up some cheerful morning and see a pair of soft eyes looking into yours, to wonder how so much beauty could have been entrusted to you, to search out the father, or the mother, in the sweet little face, and then lose the survey, in an instant of beauty, as a laughing angel lies before you; to play with the golden hair, and sow fond kisses upon this little bird in your nest—'tis this that makes the first baby the joy of all joys—a feast of the heart. To find the pale mother again by your side, more lovely than when she was wooed; to see a new tenderness in her eye, and to hear the chastened sweetness of her laugh as she tells something new about 'Willie'; to love her far more than ever, and to find ofttimes a prayer on your lips—'tis this that makes the first baby a fountain of sparkling pleasure. To watch the bud on your rosebush, to catch the first notes of your song-bird, to hear the warm praise of kind friends, and to give up your hours to the treasure—'tis this that makes the first baby a gift that angels have brought you. To look upon the track that life takes—to see the sunshine and shower—to plead for the best and shrink from the worst—to shudder when sickness steals on, and to be chastened when death comes—'tis this—oh! 'tis this that makes the first baby a hope upon earth and a gem up in Heaven."

The writer of these lines had a big soul in his body—was a man, as we may say, who could be safely entrusted

with a generous gift of humour and satire, and be relied on to consecrate his genius to the purpose of making the world happier and better, which, verily, is the true vocation of the comic author.

From the thought of a first baby to the subject of courtship and marriage is a brief step backwards. Let us "cut the caiper," and hear what our author has got to say on the antiquated but ever popular custom of courting. And, my young readers—you who have not yet discovered where your heart lies—I ask you to weigh his words well:—

"Courting is a luxury. It is salad. It is ice-water. It is a beverage. It is the play-spell of the soul. The man who has never courted has lived in vain. He has been a blind man among landscapes and waterscapes. He has been a deaf man in the land of hand-organs, and by the side of murmuring canals. Courting is like two little springs of soft water that steal out from under a rock at the foot of a mountain and run down the hill side by side, singing, and dancing, and spattering each other, eddying, and frothing, and cascading: now hiding under bank, now full of sun, and now full of shadow, till by-and by they join, and then they go slow. I am in favour of long courting: it gives the parties a chance to find out each other's trump cards. It is good exercise, and is just as innocent as two merino lambs. Courting is like strawberries and cream: it wants to be did slow, then you get the flavour. I have known folks get acquainted, fall in love, get married, settle down and get to work in three weeks from date. This is just the way some folks learn a trade, and accounts for the great number of almighty mean mechanics we have, and the poor jobs they turn out.

"Perhaps it is best I should state some good advice

to young men who are about to court with a final view to matrimony. In the first place, young man, you want to get your system all right, and then find a young woman who is willing to be courted on the square. The next thing is to find out how old she is, which you can do by asking her. And she will say she is nineteen years old. The next thing is to begin moderate; say once every night in the week for the first six months, increasing the dose as the patient seems to require it. After the first year you will begin to be well acquainted, and will begin to like the business. Don't swop photographs oftener than once in ten days, unless you forget how the girl looks. Occasionally you want to look sorry, and draw in your wind, as though you had pain. This will set the girl to teasing you, to find out what ails you. Evening meetings are a good thing to attend; it will keep your religion in tune; and then if the girl happens to be there, by accident, she can ask you to go home with her. . . . Don't court a girl for money, nor beauty, nor relations. Court a girl for fun, for the love you bear her, for the virtue and business there is in her; court her for a wife and for a mother; court her as you would court a farm —for the strength of the soil and the perfection of the title; court her as though she warn't a fool, and you another; court her in the kitchen, in the parlour, over the wash-tub, and at the piano; court this way, young man, and if you don't get a good wife and she don't get a good husband, the fault won't be in the courting."

Just one more slice of "Josh" before we pass to another subject; and let it be his inimitable letter to the "Hair Oil and Vegetable Bitters Man." Don't skip it, my reader, it is a bit of the most exquisite chaff:—

Dear Doktor Hirsute :—I reseaved a tin cup ov yure "Hair purswader," also a bottle ov yure "Salvashum Bitters," bi express, for which, I express my thanks. The greenbak, which yu enklozed waz the kind ov purswader that we ov the press fully understand. Yur hair greese, shall hav a reglar gimnastik puff, jist az soon az i kan find a spare time. I tried a little ov it on an old counter brush in my offiss, this morning, and in 15 minnitts, the brussells grew az long az a hosses tale, and i notis this afternoon, the hair begins tew cum up thru, on bak ov the brush, 'tis really wonderful ! 'tis almoste Eureka ! I rubbed a drop or two on the head ov mi cane, which haz bin bald for more than 5 years, and beggar me ! if I don't hav to shave the cane handle, evry day, before I can walk out with it. I hav a verry favrite cat, she iz one ov the Hambletonian breed ov cats, and altho she iz young, and haint bin trained yet, she shows grate signs ov speed. I thought I would just rob the cork ov the bottle on the floor, in the corner ov the room whare the cat generally repozes. The consequents waz, sum ov the "purswader" got onto the hair ov the cat's tale. When the cat aroze from her slumbers she caught sight ov her tale, which had growed tew an exalted size ; taking one more look at the tale, she started, and bi the good old Mozes ! sich running ; across the yard ! over the fence ! up wun side ov an apple tree ! and down the other ! out in the fields, away ! away ! The laste i saw ov the cat, she waz pretty mutch awl tale. I wouldn't hav took 10 dollars for the cat, with her old tale on her. In a fu daze, i shall find a spare time, and then i shall write up for our paper sumthing pyroteknik, which will make the hair grow on the head ov a number 2 mackrel, to read it.

Dear Doktor, the fact iz, sum men are born grate, sum men git grate after they are born, and sum men hav grateness hove upon them. Doctor, you are awl 3 ov these men, in one. You are a kind ov vegatable trinity, sassyfrass, pokeroot, and elderberry. It waz a happee thought in you, tew call your "Salvashun Bitters" a "vegatabel tonicks," although, old rye aint one ov the vegatabels, whiskee iz one ov the tonicks. The peopel must hev tonicks, and the more vegatabels you kan git into the gratest amount ov whiskee, the more the peopel will luv you. Thare is nothing the christian world long for so mutch, just now, as a vegatabel bitter. Sassyfrass is good for a lonesum stummuk, pokeroot is an alteratiff, and Elderberry was known to the anshients, but what! oh tell me what! yee whispring winds, what! are awl these without whiskee. Thank the Lord, that at laste, we hav got a bitter, that will tonick a man up. Nothing, sinze the good old daze ov Jamaka Rum, and sider Brandee, haz sent sich a thrill ov joy thru the wurld, az "Hirsute's Salvashun Bitters," sold respektably bi awl druggists, far and near.

Go on Doktur, manafaktring, and selling, let the cod liver, and pattent truss men, howl out in envy, let pills rant, and plasters rave, you hav got what the wurld wants, and will have, and that iz, an erb bitter, with a broad whiskee basis.

N.B.—Bizziness, Doctor, iz bizziness. The hi prise ov material, and laber, haz put up puffs with us, but upon the reseipt ov 50 Dollars more, yu kan rely upon sumthing, in our weekly, that will send "Salvashun, and Purswashun" whirling thru the land.

P.S.—Let me advize yu az a friend; if it iz indispensible necessary tew cheat a little, in the manufakter

ov the "Salvashun Bitters," let it by awl means be in the rutes, dont lower the basis.

Yures quietly,

JOSH BILLINGS.

BRET HARTE

EX-PROFESSOR NICHOL, of Glasgow, in his able and comprehensive work on *American Literature*, disposes of the humourists of the country in a single and concluding chapter, in which he says, with much apparent truth, that Transatlantic humour is the rare efflorescence of a people habitually grave, whose insight is more clear than deep. Nine-tenths of it, he tells us, relies for its effect on the figures of hyperbole, antithesis, and anti-climax; and he continues:—"Mr. Lowell, for example, makes us laugh by instancing the description of a negro so black that charcoal made a chalk-mark on him; and of a 'shingle painted so like marble that it sank in the water.' Other wits tell us that a tree 'was so tall that it took two men and a boy to see to the top of it;' that a boat 'drew so little water, it could sail wherever there had been a heavy dew;' and that a man was 'so heavy that his shadow, falling on a boy, killed him.'"

Now, these certainly be the characteristics of many American humourists, notably of Artemus Ward and

Mark Twain, as we have already pointed out. Bret Harte, however, is a horse of another colour. In this writer we discover a literary artist of the very highest order, one who is a humourist and much more, and who is most of a humourist, perhaps, when he is least of a jester. His is the humour of Charles Dickens and of Sir Walter Scott, and is as natural and genuine as either. Not, as in the case of Artemus Ward, of Mark Twain, and of Josh Billings, are we to look for Bret Harte's humour in his jokes. Though a man of much humour, he is a man of few jokes. His humour comes out naturally in his graphic, crayon-like sketches of character; in his pictures of wild life in the Californian mines—that strange world, that motley population, with its loves, its joys, its heroisms, its lawlessness, and its crime.

But we anticipate. Let us begin at the beginning.

Francis Bret Harte is a native of Albany, the capital of the State of New York, and was born in 1837. His father, who was a Professor in the Albany Female Seminary, died when our subject was little more than a child. The widowed mother was left in poor circumstances, and as soon as Bret was able to work he sought to earn his bread in a store in New York. At the age of seventeen he left for San Francisco, taking his mother with him, and from San Francisco he trudged on foot to the mines of Sonora. At Sonora, which is "a good step south" in Mexico, Bret Harte fell back upon his father's calling in life, and became a schoolmaster. The school, however, did not yield enough to encourage the master to persevere, and he threw it up and tried the mines. They did not prove mines of wealth to him, and the young adventurer next tried his hand at writing

and setting up types for the newspaper published at Eureka.

Eureka indeed! He had found his calling at last. But he was not yet out of his difficulties. The northern portion of the province of Sonora was inhabited by the Penias nation of Indians, and the pale-face and the red-skin were not upon the most millennial terms. At one time a foray was concocted and executed with such strategical neatness and precision that it ended in a massacre of the Indians which would have done honour to William III. and his chivalric troops at Glencoe. The editor of the paper was absent at the time, and Bret Harte, who had been left in charge, denounced the proceedings in terms so offensive to the self-supposed patriots of Eureka that he judged it prudent to shift his camp quietly and at once.

Shaking the dust of Eureka unceremoniously from his feet, he retraced his steps to San Francisco, where he worked as a compositor until he was appointed editor of the *Golden Era*. In intervals before this, however, he had been gold miner, express agent, U.S. Marshall's clerk, and clerk to the Surveyor-General. After acting for a time as editor of the *Era*, he endeavoured, in conjunction with Mr. Welby, to establish a paper of his own under the name of *The Californian*. Commercially this paper proved a failure, but it afforded Bret Harte the opportunity of exhibiting that strength of satire and humour and descriptive power which have since made him famous.

These few particulars of his career are necessary at this point to show that his sketches of mining life on the Pacific slope are not mere fancy pictures springing from an exuberant and lively imagination, but photographs of living realities—of men and women among

whom he had roughed it for many a day. We need not doubt that Bret Harte has sat at the same table with John Oakhurst, the gambler, either as a looker-on or a participator in the game; that he knew Kentuck and Stumpy, and all the rough, wild lot who made up the population of "Roaring Camp;" that he was a nodding acquaintance of Mliss and Miggles; that he had shaken the hand of Tennessee's partner, that he knew Tennessee himself, that he saw him "euchred," saw him expiate his guilt on the top of Marley's Hill; made one of the motley crowd that followed his remains down Grizzly Canon to the outskirts of Sandy Bar, and there witnessed a human interment which, by his own description of it, forms a picture the most strange and weirdly pathetic that can possibly be imagined.

Tennessee, at the instance of Judge Lynch, had been sentenced to be hanged for highway robbery. His partner—who had no share in his guilt—had appeared at his trial, and offered all the gold he was worth in the world to buy him from the gallows, but to no purpose. He then pled that he might get his body to bury it in his own way. This request was granted, and when the body of Tennessee was delivered into his partner's hands, he placed it on the rude waggon with which he had been wont to carry dirt from his claim, and inviting any who would care to join in the funeral just to come, he seated himself on the front of the donkey cart and drove the venerable "Jinny" in the direction of the humble cabin that had been the common dwelling of the lawless Tennessee and himself. Halting the cart in front of a rough enclosure which immediately adjoined the cabin, and which in the brief days of Tennessee's partner's matrimonial felicity had been used as a garden, and rejecting all offers of assistance, he lifted the rough

coffin (he had fashioned it with his own hands out of a section of sluicing) on his back, and deposited it unaided in a shallow grave dug by himself beforehand. He then nailed down the board which served as a lid, and mounting the little mound of earth beside it, took off his hat, and slowly mopped his face with his handkerchief. This, the crowd felt, was preliminary to a speech, and they disposed themselves variously on stumps and boulders, and sat expectant.

"When a man," began Tennessee's partner slowly, "when a man has been running free all day, what's the nat'ral thing for him to do? Why, to come home. And if he ain't in a condition to come home, what can his best friend do? Why, bring him home. And here's Tennessee has been running free, and we brings him home from his wandering."

He paused, and picked up a fragment of quartz, rubbed it thoughtfully on his sleeve, and went on:— "It ain't the first time that I've packed him on my back, as you see'd me now. It ain't the first time that I brought him to this yer cabin when he couldn't help himself; it ain't the first time that I and 'Jinny' have waited for him on yon hill and picked him up, and so fetched him home, when he couldn't speak and didn't know me; and now that it's the last time, why"—he paused, and rubbed the quartz gently on his sleeve— "you see, it's sort o' rough on his partner. And now, gentlemen," he added abruptly, picking up his long-handled shovel, "the fun'l's over; and my thanks, and Tennessee's thanks, to you for your trouble."

Resisting any proffers of assistance, he began to fill in the grave, turning his back upon the crowd that, after a few moments' hesitation, gradually withdrew. As they crossed the little ridge that hid Sandy Bar

from view, some, looking back, thought they could see Tennessee's partner, his work done, sitting upon the grave, his shovel between his knees, and his face buried in his red bandanna handkerchief.

Bret Harte's heroes and heroines are all whittled out of the roughest material. He has, indeed, almost a weakness for blackguards, and this because he believes in the ultimate good of humanity—that the worst men in the world are not wholly bad—that, indeed, they are very often not nearly so bad as they seem. He shows us the rude and lawless Kentuck giving his life for the child of dubious parentage—"The Luck of Roaring Camp;" he shows that Miggles, who had been a bar-tender in the city, by her devotion to the man who had once loved her, and was now a helpless paralytic, and whom she carried to a hut in the mountainland to nurse and cherish, had a soul in her body a thousand times the size of that of many a fair dame who prims herself on her unimpeachable morality.

"Why," asked the judge, "do you not marry this man to whom you have devoted your youthful life?"

"Well, you see," said Miggles, "it would be playing it rather low down on Jim to take advantage of his being so helpless. And then, too, if we were man and wife now, we'd both know that I was *bound* to do what I do now of my own accord."

Oh, yes, as a recent writer has truly and well said, "Bret Harte has a gospel in spite of his protest to the contrary. He preaches it informally, but not the less effectually. It is the old gospel of belief in human nature, which is to be found in the New Testament, and which has been forgotten by most modern theologians. He preaches the virtue of the publican, the purity of the harlot, the lovableness of the sinner. The

Author of the Christian religion gave great offence by maintaining a somewhat similar paradox when, turning to the self-satisfied and respectable people of the day, He remarked, 'Verily I say unto you, that the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.'"

This doctrine, as offensive to the Pharisees of our own time as it was to their prototypes of two thousand years ago, was first enunciated by Bret Harte in "The Luck of Roaring Camp," to which we have already alluded. This story was written for the *Overland Monthly*, of which he was then the editor, and it made the paper; but the history of its appearance is instructive as well as interesting. We have it from his own pen:—

"I had not yet received the proof-sheets," he writes, "when I was suddenly summoned to the office of the publisher, whom I found standing, the picture of dismay and anxiety, with the proof before him. My indignation and stupefaction can be well understood when I was told that the printer, instead of returning the proofs to me, submitted them to the publisher, with the emphatic declaration that the matter thereof was so indecent, irreligious, and improper, that his proof-reader—a young lady—had with difficulty been induced to continue its perusal, and that he, as a friend of the publisher and a well-wisher of the magazine, was impelled to present to him personally this shameless evidence of the manner in which the editor was imperilling the future of that enterprise. It should be premised that the critic was a man of character and standing, the head of a large printing establishment, and, I think, a deacon. In which circumstances the publisher frankly admitted to me that, while he could

not agree with all of the printer's criticisms, he thought the story open to grave objection, and its publication of doubtful expediency."

Finally the story was submitted to three gentlemen of culture and experience, friends of publisher and author, who were unable, however, to come to any clear decision; and so the editor and author insisted on the unpruned insertion of the story, and with what triumphant results the world well knows.

"The Luck of Roaring Camp" not only *made* the *Overland Monthly*, as I have said, but it carried the name and fame of Bret Harte to the uttermost ends of the earth. It awakened the world to the existence of a writer of wonderful power and originality—to a worker in a new and fascinating vein—a man who could see deep down into the hearts of his fellows, and could reveal all that he saw there with a power and a charm of style peculiarly his own. The reading public had been hungering for such appetising and heart-satisfying fare, and the first taste was so refreshing that, like Oliver Twist, they wanted more. And so the "Luck" was soon followed by "The Outcasts of Poker Flat" and "The Iliad of Sandy Bar," etc., and his earlier writings, in verse and prose, were for the most part resurrected from the oblivion into which they had originally dropped, and these, sandwiched with the later creations of his genius, made up collection after collection of his works, which were printed and published first in America and latterly in Britain, and all to meet a demand which was truly enormous.

Bret Harte became the rage then, as Rudyard Kipling is the rage now, and Uncle Sam, who has never been slow to reward the merit of his literary nephews, was found ready to do him honour. First one Govern-

ment office and then another was given to him. Latterly he was appointed U.S. Consul at Glasgow, an office which he filled with credit and renown for a number of years recently. Since which he has made his home in London.

All this time, perhaps, we have not seen much of Bret Harte's humour—having indicated where it is to be found rather than revealed it. The revelation of his humour, indeed, is not easy, as he very seldom writes with a humorous purpose only. Even his poem of the "Heathen Chinee," richly humorous as the *denouement* thereof proves to be, was not written for the sake of a comic effect merely, but to reveal the low cunning which is generally found to underlie the affected simplicity of John Chinaman.

> "Ah Sin was his name;
> And I shall not deny,
> In regard to the same,
> What that name might imply
> But his smile was pensive and child-like,
> As I frequent remarked to Bill Nye."

The story is most felicitiously told by "Truthful James"—and Bret Harte has written nothing that is better known—how Bill Nye and he proposed that Ah Sin should join them in a game at cards—

> "It was euchre, the same
> He did not understand."

They meant to fleece the Chinaman, and "Truthful James" confesses himself shocked at "the state of Nye's sleeve," which was stuffed full of aces and bowers.

> "But the hands that were played
> By that heathen Chinee,

And the points that he made
Were quite frightful to see—
Till at last he put down a right bower,
Which the same Nye had dealt unto me.

"Then I looked up at Nye,
And he gazed upon me,
And he rose with a sigh,
And said: 'Can this be?
We are ruined by Chinese cheap labour,'
And he went for that heathen Chinee.

"In the scene that ensued
I did not take a hand,
But the floor it was strewed
Like the leaves on the strand,
With the cards that Ah Sin had been hiding,
In the game 'he did not understand.'

"In his sleeves, which were long,
He had twenty-four Jacks—
Which is coming it strong,
Yet I state but the facts;
And we found on his nails, which were taper,
What is frequent in tapers—that's wax.

"Which is why I remark,
And my language is plain,
That for ways that are dark
And for tricks that are vain,
The heathen Chinee in peculiar,
Which the same I am free to maintain."

The cheapening of labour by the rapid influx of the Chinaman was a vexed question in America at the time the poem first appeared, and the "hit" was all the more palpable on that account.

In "Jim"—a poem the most graphic and powerfully descriptive in any language—there is humour of the rarest sort:—

JIM.

Say, there! p'r'aps
Some on you chaps
  Might know Jim Wild?
Well, no offence;
There aint no sense
  In gettin' riled!
Jim was my chum
Up on the Bar;
That's why I come
  Down from up yar,
Lookin' for Jim.
Thank ye, sir! *You*
Aint of that crew—
  Blest if you are!
Money? not much;
  That aint my kind;
I aint no such.
  Rum?—I don't mind,
Seein' its you.
Well, this yer Jim,
Did you know him?—
Jess 'bout your size;
Same kind of eyes—
Well, that is strange;
  Why, its two year
  Since he came here,
Sick for a change,
Well, here's to us;
    Eh?
The h——, you say!
    Dead?—
That little cuss?
What makes you star—
You over thar?
Can't a man drop
'S glass in yer shop
But you must r'ar?
  It wouldn't take
  D—— much to break
You and your bar.

Dead!
Poor—little—Jim!
Why, thar was me,
Jones and Bob Lee,
Harry and Ben—
No-account men;
Then to take him?
Well, thar—Goodbye—
No more, sir—I—
Eh?
What's that you say?
Why, dern it!—sho!—
No? Yes! By Jo!
Sold!
Sold! Why, you limb,
You ornery,
Derned old
Long-legged Jim.

"Flynn of Virginia" almost equals the above in its graphic force and trueness to nature, and "Dow's Flat" and "The Aged Stranger," more directly humorous than either, should not escape notice when the humour of Bret Harte is under review. But we must return to the "Outcasts of Poker Flat," for the sake of the strongly limned and touchingly pathetic picture which forms the closing scene of that weird and powerful story.

John Oakhurst and his gambling crew when banished from Poker Flat had forgathered with a runaway couple —Tom Simson and Piney—from Sandy Bar. All are overtaken together by a snowstorm, and starvation and death stare them in the face. One after another of the men—the meaner of them first—leave ostensibly to discover a means of escape, but they never return. At length there are only the Duchess and Piney, Oakhurst and Tom Simson, the "Innocent," left. The body of Mother Shipton had just been committed to the snow

when "Mr. Oakhurst took the Innocent aside, and showed him a pair of snow-shoes, which he had fashioned from the old pack saddle. 'There's one chance in a hundred to save her yet,' he said, pointing to Piney. 'And it's there,' he added, pointing toward Poker Flat. 'If you can reach there in two days she's safe.' 'And you?' asked Tom Simson. 'I'll stay here,' was the curt reply.

"The lovers parted with a long embrace. 'You are not going, too?' said the Duchess, as she saw Mr. Oakhurst apparently waiting to accompany him. 'As far as the cañon,' he replied. He turned suddenly, and kissed the Duchess, leaving her pallid face aflame, and her trembling limbs rigid with amazement.

"Night came, but not Mr. Oakhurst. It brought the storm again and the whirling snow. Then the Duchess, feeding the fire, found that some one had quietly piled beside the hut enough fuel to last a few days longer. The tears rose to her eyes, but she hid them from Piney.

"The women slept but little. In the morning, looking into each other's faces, they read their fate. Neither spoke; but Piney, accepting the position of the stronger, drew near and placed her arm around the Duchess's waist. They kept this attitude for the rest of the day. That night the storm reached its greatest fury, and, rending asunder the protecting pines, invaded the very hut.

"Towards morning they found themselves unable to feed the fire, which gradually died away. As the embers slowly blackened, the Duchess crept closer to Piney, and broke the silence of many hours—'Piney, can you pray?' 'No, dear,' said Piney, simply. The Duchess, without knowing exactly why, felt relieved,

and, putting her head upon Piney's shoulder, spoke no more. And so reclining, the younger and purer pillowing the head of her soiled sister upon her virgin breast, they fell asleep.

"The wind lulled as if it feared to waken them. Feathery drifts of snow, shaken from the long pine boughs, flew like white winged birds, and settled about them as they slept. The moon through the rifted clouds looked down upon what had been the camp. But all human stain, all trace of earthly travail, was hidden beneath the spotless mantle mercifully flung from above.

"They slept all that day and the next, nor did they waken when voices and footsteps broke the silence of the camp. And when pitying fingers brushed the snow from their wan faces, you could scarcely have told from the equal peace that dwelt upon them, which was she that had sinned. Even the law of Poker Flat recognised this, and turned away, leaving them still locked in each other's arms.

"But at the head of the gulch, on one of the largest pine trees, they found the deuce of clubs pinned to the bark with a bowie-knife. It bore the following, written in pencil, in a firm hand :—

†

BENEATH THIS TREE
LIES THE BODY
OF
JOHN OAKHURST,
WHO STRUCK A STREAK OF BAD LUCK
ON THE 23RD OF NOVEMBER 1850,
AND
HANDED IN HIS CHECKS
ON THE 7TH DECEMBER 1850.

And pulseless and cold, with a Derringer by his side and a bullet in his heart, though still calm as in life, beneath the snow lay he who was at once the strongest and yet the weakest of the outcasts of Poker Flat."

I spoke of "Flynn of Virginia" and "Dow's Flat." Let us quote the latter now. There's no finer example of the author's humorous muse in print :—

DOW'S FLAT.

Dow's Flat. That's its name,
And I reckon that you
Are a stranger? The same?
Well, I thought it was true,—
For thar isn't a man on the river as can't spot the
Place at first view.

It was called after Dow,—
Which the same was an ass,—
And as to the how
That the thing kem to pass,—
Just tie up your hoss to the buckeye, and sit ye
Down here in the grass.

You see this yer Dow
Had the worse kind of luck ;
He slipped up somehow
On each thing that he struck.
Why, ef he'd a straddled that fence-rail the darned
Thing 'ed get up and buck.

He mined on the bar
Till he couldn't pay rates ;
He was smashed by a car
When he tunnelled with Bates ;
And right on the top of his trouble kem his
Wife and five kids from the States.

It was rough—mighty rough ;
But the boys they stood by,

And they brought him the stuff
For a house on the sly ;
And the old woman,—well, she did washing and
Took on—when no one was nigh.

But this yer luck of Dow's
Was so powerful mean,
That the spring near his house
Dried up on the green ;
And he sunk forty feet for water, but never
A drop to be seen.

Then the bar petered out,
And the boys wouldn't stay ;
And the chills got about,
And his wife fell away :
But Dow, in his well, kept a peggin' in his usual
Ridikilous way.

One day—it was June,—
And a year ago jest,—
This Dow kem at noon
To his work with the rest,
With a shovel and pick on his shoulder, and a
Derringer hid in his breast

He goes to the well,
And he stands on the brink,
And stops for a spell
Just to listen and think :
For the sun in his eyes, (jest like this, sir) you see,
Kinder made the cuss blink,

His two ragged gals
In the gulch were at play,
And a gownd that was Sal's
Kinder flapped on a bay ;
Not much for a man to be leavin' ; but his all—as
I've heer'd the folks say.

And—that's a peart hoss
Thet you've got—ain't it now?
What might be her cost?
Eh? Oh! Well then, Dow—
Let's see—well, that forty-foot grave wasn't his, sir,
That day anyhow.

For a blow of his pick
Sorter caved in the side,
And he looked and turned sick,
Then he trembled and cried,
For you see the dern cuss had struck— 'Water?'
Beg your parding, young man, then you lied.

It was *gold*—in the quartz,
And it ran all alike;
And I reckon five oughts
Was the worth of that strike;
And that house with the coopilow's his'n—which the
Same isn't bad for a Pike.

Thet's why it's Dow's Flat,
And the thing of it is
That he kinder got that
Through sheer contrairiness;
For 'twas water the derned cuss was seekin'; and
His luck made him certain to miss.

That's so. Thar's your way
To the left of yon tree;
But—a—look h'yer, say?
Won't you come up to tea?
No? Well, then, the next time you're passin';
And ask after Dow—and thet's *me*.

Bret Harte has written much that has not been referred to here, but none of his later work, excellent as some of it certainly is, has rivalled these earlier sketches of mining life on the Pacific Slope on which his reputation as an author will ultimately rest. These,

however, should keep his name and his memory green for many a long day.

Finally here we will read together :—

THE ENOCH OF CALAVERAS.

Well, dog my cats ! Say, stranger,
You must have travelled far !
Just flood your lower level
And light a fresh cigar.
Don't tell me in this weather,
You hoofed it all the way ?
Well, slice my liver lengthways !
Why, stranger, what's to pay ?

Huntin' yer wife, you tell me ;
Well, now, dog-gone my skin !
She thought you dead and buried,
And then bestowed her fin
Upon another fellow !
Just put it there, old pard !
Some fellows strike the soft things,
But you have hit it hard.

I'm right onto your feelin's,
I know how it would be,
If my own shrub slopped over
And got away from me.
Say, stranger ; that old sage hen,
That's cookin' thar inside,
Is warranted the finest wool,
And just a square yard wide.

I wouldn't hurt yer, pardner,
But I tell *you*, no man
Was ever blessed as I am
With that old pelican.
It's goin' on some two year
Since she was j'ined to me,
She was a widder prior,
Her name was Sophy Lee—

Good God ! old man, what's happened ?
  Her ? She ? Is that the one ?
That's her ? Your wife, you tell me ?
  Now reach down for yer gun.
I never injured no man,
  And no man me but squealed,
And any one who takes her
  Must do it d——d well heeled !

Listen ? Surely. Certainly
  I'll let you look at her.
Peek through the door, she's in thar,
  Is that your furnitur' ?
Speak, man, quick ! You're mistaken !
  No ! Yours ! You recognize
My wife, your wife, the same one ?
  The man who says so, lies !

Don't mind what I say, pardner,
  I'm not much on the gush,
But the thing comes down on me
  Like fours upon a flush.
If that's your wife—hold—steady !
  That bottle, now my coat,
She'll think me dead as you wer.
  My pipe. Thar. I'm afloat.

But let me leave a message.
  No ; tell her that I died :
No, no ; not that way, either,
  Just tell her that I cried.
It don't rain much. Now, pardner,
  Be to her what I've been,
Or, by the God that hates you,
  You'll see me back again !

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

IN Oliver Wendell Holmes (recently deceased), we discover the John Stuart Blackie of American literature. Dr. Holmes, like Professor Blackie, was a man of great learning, and the propounder of much sound philosophy. He was a delightful poet, a ready and attractive platform speaker, a true patriot, a man of character, with a charming personality, and a fine relish of existence. A born humourist, too, and—like Blackie again—one who carried so much of the sunshine of youth into his old age, that he was yet, when in his eighty-fourth year, delightfully juvenile in the main aspects of his character and bearing.

To the reading public in this country, as perhaps also in his native America, Dr. Holmes is best known as the author of *The Autocrat at the Breakfast Table*, *The Poet at the Breakfast Table*, and *The Professor at the Breakfast Table;*" three works of a gossipy, witty, and informing character, which, though not cast in exactly the same free and easy style, are yet strongly suggestive of Wilson's *Noctes Ambrosianæ*. The ill-natured critic,

indeed, has described him as nothing more than an expurgated edition of Montaigne and Burton and "Christopher North." But unfairly; for Holmes has a vein of his own. It may be less mellow than that of some of these, but it is as genuine as either; and he has made a mark on his own time, both as a humorous and a serious writer, such as has been given only to a few authors to achieve.

I have said that he is most familiarly known as the author of the three books above named; and he is fortunate in this, that he is best known by what is undoubtedly his best work—a favour which by no means falls to the lot of every writer. Some authors, indeed, are most widely known by their worst work; and this will happen now and again just so long as the public finds more delight in having the intellect tickled than in having the mind fed. Besides these works—and they are not equal, the *Autocrat* being decidedly the best—and his poems, Dr. Holmes wrote two novels of a psychological character—*Elsie Venner* and *The Guardian Angel*—exhibiting much keenness of thought and a wonderful power of description as well as a lively play of fancy. They abound in wise saws and witty moral instances, too. But they are not vastly popular, and just because he was not great as a novelist as he was great in other things—as he was great as a wit, as a poet, as a philosopher, and as a general man of letters.

The son of the whilom minister of the Congregational Church in Cambridge, Massachusetts—a man of ability, and the author of some historical works—our subject was born there in 1809. He first shaped his course for the bar, but afterwards took up the study of medicine in the schools of Paris. Returning to Boston in 1836, he was, two years subsequently, appointed Professor of

Anatomy and Physiology in Dartmouth College. Latterly he filled the same chair for more than fifty years at Harvard. As a physician and medical professor, Dr. Holmes gained considerable fame because in his capacity as such, he sought to rid the world of many an absurd theory cherished ignorantly and warmly. But it is as a *litterateur* that he is known to the world at large, and will be remembered in the years to come.

His career as a man of letters was a long and a brilliant one, few among his compeers maintaining so firm a hold upon the great body of intelligent readers. He first attracted attention as the writer of witty and original verses, which were widely copied by the American journals, and also by serial publications beyond the seas. Succeeding these ephemera—and when he had just attained his majority—there appeared at Boston a slim volume entitled *Illustrations of the Athenæum Gallery of Paintings*, the same being the joint production of our author and Mr. Epes Sargent. This, which was published anonymously, was succeeded by *Poetry: A Metrical Essay*, originally delivered before a literary society in Cambridge. It relates to the nature and offices of poetry, and is itself a series of brilliant illustrations of the ideas of which it is an expression. In 1843 *Terpsichore* appeared, and three years later *Urania: A Rhymed Lesson*. The last, which was first read before the Mercantile Literary Association, is a collection of brilliant thoughts, with many local allusions, in compact, but flowing and harmonious versification, and, with the exception of the *Metrical Essay*, is the longest poem from his pen. Many of its hints, it will be observed by the readers of both books, were developed later with rare effect in the *Autocrat*, his best known and his best book, as I have already said. It is

here that we find him one of the most companionable of authors, as well as one of the most bracing—our very good and candid friend—exposing our pet vices and foolish aversions, pricking the weak and the raw parts in our human nature, and bracing and regulating all with the sugar-coated pill of humorous moral suasion.

But holding still to his verses here, the charm of Holmes' poetry is found in its spontaneity, its wit and humour, and genial sentiment, and in the exquisite grace and finish of its style. There is no straining after effect. "His lyrics," as one has said, "ring and sparkle like cataracts of silver, and his serious poems—as successful in their way as those mirthful frolics of his muse for which he is best known—arrest the attention by touches of the most genuine pathos and tenderness." For many years he was virtually the laureate of Boston and Cambridge, and no other American poet has produced so great a number of odes and hymns for public occasions. His Centennial Harvard songs; his odes to Washington and Webster; and his graceful and touching tribute to his friend Lowell will be long held in the loving memory of his countrymen. Not less esteemed will be his songs of the war time—"Old Ironsides," and the story of "Bunker Hill," etc., together with his memorial verses to Lincoln and to Sumner.

Dr. Holmes's songs of the war, take rank with the very best that sprang out of the bitter struggle between North and South, even with the grand and touching ode of Lowell, and the stately and triumphant *Laus Deo!* of Whittier. His "Union and Liberty" might well be made the war song of America. Take a verse as a sample of its spirit and fibre :—

"Flag of the heroes who left us their glory,
Borne through their battle-fields' thunder and flame,

Blazoned in song and illumined in story,
Wave o'er us all who inherit their fame!
Up with our banner bright,
Sprinkled with starry light,
Spread its fair emblems from mountain to shore,
While through the sounding sky
Loud rings the nation's cry—
UNION AND LIBERTY, ONE EVERMORE!"

I am not forgetting that my business here is to write of the humour of Dr. Holmes. But I know how difficult it is to dissociate his humour and his sentiment—to separate what with him were frequently the two equal parts of a single potion. Humour he had in abundance; but you cannot sample this man's humour where it is most delicious as you may that of Mark Twain, or any writer whose purpose and aim is to be humorous and nothing more. When on a rare occasion Holmes set himself to be funny merely—as in the "Wonderful One-Hoss Shay," and the "Ballad of the Oysterman," and other pieces, the effect depends upon the recitation of the whole piece. In the "Autocrat" and its companion volumes, his facetiousness is assumed only to gain the reader's sympathy and attention, so that he may be privileged to whisper important things in his ear and find occasion to point a moral. You take up his books for amusement, and are not disappointed even in this respect, but when you come to lay them down you find you have been instructed as well as entertained. Listen to these few witty and wise remarks culled here and there from his prose writings:—

"Sin has many tools, but a lie is the handle that fits them all."

"Where there are mice there must be cats."

"All our other features are made for us, but a man makes his own mouth."

"Certificates are for the most part like ostrich eggs: the giver never knows what is hatched out of them."

"Where there is one man who squints with his eyes, there are a dozen who squint with their brains."

"The physician whose face reflects his patient's condition like a mirror may do well enough to examine people for a life insurance office, but does not belong to the sick room."

"When a strong brain is weighed with a true heart, it seems to me like balancing a bubble against a wedge of pure gold."

"I would have a woman as true as death. At the first real lie which works from the heart outward she should be tenderly chloroformed into a better world, where she can have an angel for a governess and feed on strange fruits which shall make her all over again—even to the bones and marrow."

"The brain women never interest us like the heart women: white roses please less than red."

"Controversy equalises fools and wise men in the same way—and the fools know it."

"If the sense of the ridiculous is one side of an impressible nature it is very well; but if that is all there is in a man he had better have been an ape, and stood at the head of his profession at once."

Now enough; for that last remark has brought us to the text which Dr. Holmes made the warning maxim of his literary life. He could be funnier than he ever cared to be. He had an experience once which taught him a lesson. Let him tell the story in his own delightsome way:—

"I wrote some lines once on a time
In wondrous merry mood,
And thought, as usual, men would say
They were exceeding good.

"They were so queer, so very queer,
I laughed as I would die;
Albeit, in the general way,
A sober man am I.

"I called my servant, and he came;
How kind it was of him
To mind a slender man like me,
He of the mighty limb!

"'These to the printer,' I exclaimed,
And, in my humorous way,
I added (as a trifling jest),
'There'll be the devil to pay.'

"He took the paper, and I watched,
And saw him peep within;
At the first line he read, his face
Was all upon the grin.

"He read the next, the grin grew broad,
And shot from ear to ear;
He read the third; a chuckling noise
I now began to hear.

"The fourth; he broke into a roar;
The fifth; his waistband split;
The sixth; he burst five buttons off
And tumbled in a fit.

"For days and nights, with sleepless eye,
I watched that wretched man,
And since, I never dare to write
As funny as I can."

His poems in the above manner have caused their author to be compared to our own Tom Hood; and in "My Aunt," as elsewhere, he certainly touches the skirt of his English master—no easy achievement:—

"My aunt! my dear, unmarried aunt!
Long years have o'er her flown;
Yet still she strains the aching clasp
That binds her virgin zone;
I know it hurts her, though she looks
As cheerful as she can—
Her waist is ampler than her life,
For life is but a *span*."

The following epigram on Matrimony, too, is just such as Hood might have written:—

"Quoth Tom, 'Though fair her features be,
It is her figure pleases me.'
'What may her figure be?' I cried.
'*One hundred thousand*' he replied."

But it is where humour and sentiment dwell together that we find Holmes at his best—Holmes the delightful—Holmes without the shadow of a suggestion of anybody else. A choice example of him in this way is found in his quaint little poem "The Old Man Dreams," which must be quoted entire. He won't sample here:—

THE OLD MAN DREAMS.

Oh, for one hour of youthful joy! Give back my twentieth spring!
I'd rather laugh a bright-haired boy than reign a gray-beard king;
Off with the wrinkled spoils of age! Away with learning's crown!
Tear out life's wisdom-written page, and dash its trophies down!

One moment let my life-blood stream from boyhood's fount of flame!
Give me one giddy, reeling dream of life all love and fame!
My listening angel heard the prayer, and, calmly smiling, said,
"If I but touch thy silvered hair, thy hasty wish hath sped.

"But is there nothing in thy track to bid thee fondly stay,
While the swift seasons hurry back to find the wished-for day?"
"Ah, truest soul of womankind! Without thee, what were life?
One bliss I cannot leave behind: I'll take—my—precious wife!"

The angel took a sapphire pen and wrote in rainbow dew,
"The man would be a boy again, and be a husband too!
And is there nothing yet unsaid before the change appears?
Remember, all their gifts have fled with those dissolving years!"

"Why, yes;" for memory would recall my fond paternal joys;
I could not bear to leave them all: "I'll take—my girl—and—boys!"
The smiling angel dropped his pen—"Why, this will never do;
The man would be a boy again, and be a father too!"

And so I laughed: my laughter woke the household with its noise—
I wrote my dream, when morning broke, to please the gray-haired boys.

An eminent Frenchman once said that it was Oliver Wendell Holmes that taught the Yankee to laugh.

When dining with Lord Coleridge, the subject of lawyers came up, and referring to the American man of the bar, Holmes said that the poverty of the American lawyer and the wealth of his client was his glory.

On another occasion Mrs. Siddons was being discussed, and some one said that the statesman Fox had been smitten by the great actress. To this the poet replied by saying that, from all he had ever heard of her, he could not understand a man falling in love with her. His reason was that she was so grand that a man might as well fall in love with the pyramids. She might have been loved by the worshipful company of coachmakers or a board of aldermen, but it was beyond the range of possibility that one man could ever love her.

After he had been lionized by a delegation of Westerners, some one asked him how he liked it. "Like it!" he said. "I felt like the small elephant at the zoo with a cheap excursion party on his back."

Few men who have done so many things as Oliver Wendell Holmes have been able to do them all so well. "There have been men as witty, though not many," says Dr. Underwood, his personal friend of many years, "and others as acute or as gay, pathetic, humourous, graceful, fiery, reflective, or trenchant; but who, in our time at least, has united all these attributes—has made them all effective in charming verse and brilliant prose, and based all upon an understanding that might have served a sage? What a marvellous intellect, with a faculty for every form of use, and resources for every contingency! This facile and changeful movement gives the charm of surprise to whatever he does. In his open and frank merriment there comes some wise reflections; in his poetic fancies there are hints of the highest knowledge; and in his gravest discourse there are sudden gleams of wit. One may take the dimension and gauge the force of most minds, but in that of Holmes there is always an unknown *plus* that holds the observer in delighted expectation."

Should his reminiscences ever appear, they will form a book of absorbing interest from the fact of his long and intimate acquaintance with Lowell, with Longfellow, Emerson, Whittier, Hawthorne, and others, and from his warm appreciation of their different natures and literary characteristics, and his subtle power of conveying his impressions and deductions to the minds of his readers. Lowell and he were the very warmest of friends, they enjoyed gifts so much in common; for Holmes had a power of humourous

satire too, which he employed with effect, though to a less extent than his literary confrere. Here, for example, is a slap in the face to his own America, which might have been delivered by the author of the *Biglow Papers* :—

> "Thou, O my country, hast thy foolish ways!
> Too apt to purr at every stranger's praise;
> But if the stranger touch thy modes or laws,
> Off goes the velvet, and out comes the claws."

The spirit of America is there in a nutshell!

To quote an extended specimen of his humour, and avoid such examples as are very well known, we could not treat him fairer than by making an epitome of his "Visit to the Asylum for Aged and Decayed Punsters," which is a bit of the most delicious humourous satire.

A late distinguished townsman of his own—Noah Dow—he tells us, bequeathed a large portion of his fortune to this admirable establishment—being thereto moved, as his will expressed it, by the desire of *N. Dowing* some public institution for the benefit of mankind. On being consulted as to the rules of the institution, and the selection of a superintendent, Mr. Dow replied that all *boards* must construct their own *platforms* of operation. Let them select *anyhow*, and he should be pleased. N. E. How was chosen in compliance with this delicate suggestion.

Mr. Holmes visited the institution in company with a friend, who is one of the directors. The charter, he tells us, provides for the support of one hundred aged and decayed gentlemen-punsters. On arriving at the south gate of the asylum grounds he was about to ring, but his friend held his arm, and begged him to rap with his stick, which he did. An old man with a very

comical face, presently opened the gate and put out his head.

"So you prefer *cane* to *a bell*, do you?" he said, and began chuckling and coughing at a great rate.

The director winked to the "Autocrat." Then,

"You're here still, Old Joe, I see," he said to the old man.

"Yes, yes," was the reply; "and it's very odd, considering how often I've *bolted*, o' nights."

He then threw open the double gates for the visitors to ride through.

"Now," said the old man, as he pulled the gates after him, "you've had a long journey."

"Why, how is that, Old Joe?" was asked.

"Don't you see?" he answered, "there's the *east hinges* on one side of the gate, and there's the *west hinges* on t'other side—haw! haw! haw!"

They had no sooner got into the yard than a feeble little gentleman, with a remarkably bright eye, came up to them, and looking very serious, as if something had happened.

"The town has entered a complaint against the Asylum, as a gambling establishment," he said to the director.

"What do you mean?" he was asked.

"Why, they complain that there's a *lot o' rye* in the premises," he answered, pointing to a field of that grain, his shoulders shaking with laughter as he went.

On entering the main building they saw the rules and regulations for the Asylum posted. These stated that each inmate should be permitted to make puns freely from eight in the morning until ten at night, except during service in the chapel and grace before meals. Here they were joined by the superintendent, who went round with them. He had been a noted

punster in his time, and well known in the business world, but lost his customers by making too free with their names—as in the famous story he set afloat in '29 of *forgeries* attaching to the names of a noted judge, an eminent lawyer, the secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions, and the well known landlord at Springfield. One of the *four Jerries*, he added, was of gigantic magnitude.

The superintendent showed some of his old tendencies as he went round with the visitors.

"Do you know," he broke out all at once, "why they don't take *steppes* in Tartary for establishing insane hospitals?"

The parties confessed their ignorance. "Because there are *nomad* people to be found there," he said with a dignified smile.

He proceeded to introduce the different inmates. The first was a middle-aged scholarly man, who was seated at a table with a Webster's Dictionary and a sheet of paper before him.

"Well, what luck to-day, Mr. Mowzer?" said the superintendent.

He turned to his notes and read:—"Don't you see Webster *ers* in the words cent*er* and theat*er*? If he spells leather *lether*, and feather *fether*, isn't there danger that he'll give us a *bad spell of weather*? Besides, Webster is a resurrectionist; he does not allow *u* to rest quietly in the *mould*. These are all this morning. Good day, gentlemen." Then to the superintendent, "ADD YOU, sir!"

The next inmate was a semi-idiotic looking old man. He had a heap of block-letters before him, and he pointed without saying a word to the arrangements he had made with them on the table.

By and bye they were joined by a plausible-looking, bald-headed man.

"Good morning, Mr. Riggles," said the superintendent. "Anything fresh this morning? Any conundrums?"

"Nothing of any account," he answered. "We had hasty-pudding yesterday."

"What has that got to do with conundrums?" asked the superintendent.

"I asked the inmates why it was like the Prince."

"Oh! because it comes attended by its *sweet*," said the superintendent.

"No," said Mr. Riggles; "it is because the *lasses* run after it."

"Riggles is failing," sighed the superintendent, and the party moved on.

The next inmate looked as if he might have been a sailor formerly.

"Ask what his calling was," said the superintendent.

"Followed the sea," he replied to the question. "Went as a mate in a fishing schooner."

"Why did you give it up?"

"Because I didn't like working for *two masters*," he replied."

Presently they came upon a group of elderly persons gathered about a venerable gentleman with flowing hair, who was propounding questions to a row of inmates.

"Can any inmate give me a motto for M. Berger?" he said.

Nobody responded for two or three minutes. At last an old graduate of one of the Universities held out his hand.

"Rem a *cue* tetigit."

"Go to the head of the class, Josselyn," said the venerable Patriarch.

The successful inmate did as he was told, but in a very rough way, pushing against two or three of the class.

"How is this?" asked the Patriarch.

"You told me to go up jostlin'," he replied. The old gentlemen who had been shoved about enjoyed it too much to be angry.

Moving from thence, "There is one thing I have forgotten to show you," said the superintendent, "the cell for the confinement of violent and unmanageable punsters."

The visitors were curious to see this. The superintendent led them up several dark stairs to a corridor, then along a narrow passage, and opened a large door which looked out on the main entrance.

"We have not seen the cell for the confinement of violent and unmanageable punsters," both exclaimed.

"This is the *sell*," he remarked, pointing to the outdoor prospect.

They made their bow to the superintendent, and walked to the place where their carriage was waiting for them. On the way an exceedingly decrepid old man moved slowly towards them, with a perfectly blank look on his face, but still appearing as if he wished to speak.

"Look," said the director, "this is our centenarian."

The ancient man crawled towards them, cocked an eye, with which he seemed to see a little, and said—

"Sarvant, young gentleman. Why is a—a—a— like a—a—a—? Give it up? Because it's a—a—a—."

He smiled a pleasant smile, as if it were all plain enough.

"One hundred and seven last Christmas," said the director. "He lost his answers about the age of ninety-eight. Of late years he puts his whole conundrums in blank; but they please him just as well."

You and I, my reader, have friends rapidly graduating for lifelong incarceration in an institution of this kind.

Well known as it is—and it is only so very well known because it is so very good—we cannot pass from the consideration of Oliver Wendell Holmes's humour without recounting the ever fresh and delightsome history of "The Deacon's Masterpiece," or—

THE WONDERFUL ONE-HOSS SHAY.

Have you heard of the wonderful one-hoss shay,
That was built in such a logical way
It ran a hundred years to a day?
And then of a sudden it—ah but stay,
I'll tell you what happened, without delay—
Scaring the parson into fits,
Frightening people out of their wits—
Have you heard of that, I say?

Seventeen hundred and fifty-five,
Georgius Secundus was then alive—
Snuffy old drone from the German hive.
That was the year when Lisbon town
Saw the earth open and gulp her down;
And Braddock's army was done so brown,
Left without a scalp to its crown.
It was on that terrible earthquake day
That the Deacon finished the one-hoss shay.

Now, in building of chaises, I tell you what,
There is always, *somewhere*, a weakest spot—
In hub, tire, felloe, in spring or thill,
In panel or crossbar, or floor, or sill,
In screw, bolt, thoroughbrace—lurking still.

Find it somewhere you must and will—
Above or below, or within or without;
And that's the reason beyond a doubt,
A chaise *breaks down*, but doesn't *wear out*.

But the Deacon *swore* (as deacons do,
With an "I dew vum" or an "I tell *yeou*")—
He would build one shay to beat the taown
'N' the keounty 'n' the kentry raoun';
It should be built so that it couldn't break down:
"Fur," said the Deacon, "'tis mighty plain
That the weakes' place mus' stan' the strain;
'N' the way 't' fix it, uz I maintain,
Is only jest
To make that place uz strong uz the rest."

So the Deacon inquired of the village folk
Where he could find the strongest oak,
That couldn't be split, nor bent, nor broke—
That was for spokes, and floor, and sills;
He sent for lancewood, to make the thills;
The crossbars were ash, from the straightest trees;
The panels of white-wood, that cuts like cheese,
But lasts like iron for things like these;
The hubs from logs from the "Settler's ellum,"
Last of its timber—they couldn't sell 'em—
Never an axe had seen the chips,
And the wedges flew from between their lips,
Their blunt ends frizzled like celery-tips;
Step and prop-iron, bolt and screw,
Spring, tire, axle, and linch-pin too,
Steel of the finest, bright and blue;
Thoroughbrace bison-skin, thick and wide;
Boot, top, dasher, from tough old hide,
Found in the pit when the tanner died.
That was the way "he put her through,"
"There," said the deacon "naow she'll dew!"

Do! I tell you, I rather guess
She was a wonder and nothing less!
Colts grew horses, beards turned gray,

Deacon and deaconess dropped away ;
Children and grandchildren—where were they ?
But there stood the stout old one-hoss shay,
As fresh as on Lisbon-earthquake day !

EIGHTEEN HUNDRED—it came, and found
The Deacon's masterpiece strong and sound.
Eighteen hundred, increased by ten—
"Hahnsum Kerridge" they called it then.
Eighteen hundred and twenty came—
Running as usual—much the same.
Thirty and forty at last arrive ;
And then came fifty—and FIFTY-FIVE.

Little of all we value here
Wakes on the morn of its hundredth year
Without both feeling and looking queer.
In fact there's nothing that keeps its youth,
So far as I know, but a tree and truth.
(This is a moral that runs at large ;
Take it—you're welcome—no extra charge.)

FIRST OF NOVEMBER—the Earthquake day—
There are traces of age on the one-hoss shay—
A general flavour of mild decay—
But nothing local, as one might say.
There couldn't be, for the Deacon's art
Had made it so like in every part
That there wasn't a chance for one to start.
For the wheels were just as strong as the thills,
And the floor was just as strong as the sills,
And the panels just as strong as the floor,
And the whipple-tree neither less nor more,
And the back crossbar as strong as the fore,
And the spring and axle, and hub *encore ;*
And yet, *as a whole,* it is past a doubt,
In another hour it will be *worn out.*

First of November, 'Fifty-five !
This morning the parson takes a drive.

Now, small boys, get out of the way !
Here comes the wonderful one-hoss shay,
Drawn by a rat-tailed ewe-necked bay.
" Hiddup ! " said the parson—off went they.

The parson was working his Sunday text—
He got to *fifthly*, and stopped perplexed
At what, in the world, was coming next.
All at once the horse stood still,
Close by the meet'n' house on the hill ;
First a shiver, and then a thrill,
Then something decidedly like a spill ;
And the parson was sitting upon a rock
At half-past nine by the meet'n' house clock—
Just the hour of the Earthquake shock !
What do you think the parson found
When he got up and stared around ?
The poor old chaise in a heap or mound,
As if it had been to the mill and ground !
You see, of course, if you're not a dunce,
How it went to pieces all at once—
All at once, and nothing first—
Just as bubbles do when they burst—
End of the wonderful one-hoss shay.
Logic is *Logic*. That's all I say.

You have enjoyed that, my reader ? Then, let me give you one more slice of its author's quality, this last being of a quieter and more insinuative character. That was from the " Autocrat," this is from the " Poet at the Breakfast Table," and the supposed speaker of the piece is a very charming young lady.

AUNT TABITHA.

Whatever I do, and whatever I say,
Aunt Tabitha tells me that isn't the way ;
When *she* was a girl (forty summers ago)
Aunt Tabitha tells me they never did so.

Dear aunt! If I only would take her advice!
But I like my own way, and I find it *so* nice!
And besides, I forget half the things I am told;
But they all will come back to me—when I am old.

If a youth passes by, it may happen, no doubt,
He may chance to look in as I chance to look out;
She would never endure an impertinent stare—
It is *horrid*, she says, and I mustn't sit there.

A walk in the moonlight has pleasures, I own,
But it isn't quite safe to be walking alone;
So I take a lad's arm—just for safety, you know—
But Aunt Tabitha tells me *they* didn't do so.

How wicked we are, and how good they were then!
They kept at arm's length those detestable men;
What an era of virtue she lived in!—But stay—
Were the *men* all such rogues in Aunt Tabitha's day?

If the men *were* so wicked, I'll ask my papa
How he dared to propose to my darling mamma;
Was he like the rest of them? Goodness! Who knows?
And what shall *I* say, if a wretch should propose?

I am thinking, if aunt knew so little of sin,
What a wonder Aunt Tabitha's aunt must have been!
And her grand-aunt—it scares me—how shockingly sad
That we girls of to-day are so frightfully bad!

A martyr will save us, and nothing else can:
Let *me* perish—to rescue some wretched young man!
Though when to the altar a victim I go,
Aunt Tabitha'll tell me *she* never did so!

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

VERY dear to many in this country is the name of James Russell Lowell. An evident thrill of delight passed through the whole British nation when, in 1880, he was appointed American Minister at the Court of St. James; and we deemed the appointment an honour to ourselves scarcely less than to the gifted author. Why? Because long ere this we had learned to esteem the man in the light of his writings. We had come to love him for the sake of the many excellent poems and essays that had been wafted to us from his busy brain; for the sake of the books he had given us, *A Year's Life*, *Among my Books*, *Under the Willows*, *My Study Windows*, *The Biglow Papers*, and many other excellent and delectable volumes in prose and verse.

True, in the character of Hosea Biglow, he had sounded unpleasant truths in the ears of John Bull. But his reproach was that of a candid and loving friend. Yea, he had lashed our diplomatic body with a whip of

scorpions, but it was for wrong-doing; and while we may have winced under the chastisement, we dared not scorn, but were bound to respect the hand that administered the blow.

We hailed with delight, as I have said, the news of his coming to stay for a period amongst us. The appointment, we know, was equally pleasant to Lowell himself. "It was a fact well known to those who were honoured with his personal friendship," says a recent writer, "that he felt more at home in London than he did anywhere else on this planet of ours. He appreciated even the climate of London more than ever any Londoner did; whilst, so far as old literary London was concerned, that of the eighteenth century, no man amongst the *literati* of Fleet Street knew its old literary and classic haunts better than he. More than this—not to speak of Shakespeare—he had Beaumont and Fletcher and Kit Marlowe by heart, whilst he was so much at home with Chaucer that he could have donned gown and cowl and joined the Canterbury Pilgrims at a moment's notice without having his credentials ever asked for or called in question."

It is nearly fifty years since Mr. Lowell's name became known to the reading public in this country—when he was less than thirty years old. The son of the Rev. Charles Lowell, a Congregationalist minister at Cambridge, Massachusetts, he was born there on the 22nd February—Washington's birthday—1819. From both parents he had transmitted to him high intelligence, sound principles, and correct ideals. But it was from his mother, Harriet Traill Spence, the descendant of an Orkney family, a woman of superior mind, who was fond of reading, and revelled in reciting the old Scottish ballads, that he received his marked poetic and

imaginative faculties. At the age of fifteen he entered Harvard University, where he won the class-poem prize, and graduated at nineteen.

On leaving college he was recommended to study law, which he did for a time; but the legal profession possessed no great charm for him, and he let it drop, and adopted a literary and journalistic career as a course more agreeable to his natural disposition. In this he made wise choice. Through the tedious intricacies of legal practice he might have risen to the judicial bench, or developed into a professional politician; but in these the world would probably have lost a poet and statesman of note and a man very widely beloved. A collection of his poems—*A Year's Life*—appeared in 1841, and, continuing to write, he so thoroughly established his claim to be regarded as a leading man of letters in America that in 1857, on the resignation of Mr. Longfellow, he was presented to the chair of modern languages and *belles lettres* in the College of his *Alma Mater*. The recipient's passion for thoroughness justified the appointment—ay, made it a happy one for the directorate. In one of the "Biglows" he tells us—

> "Folks that worked thorough was the ones that thriv,
> But bad work follers ye ez long's ye live;
> You can't git rid on't, jest as sure as sin,
> It's allers askin' to be done agin."

That his work as a professor should be thorough, and not require to be "done agin," Mr. Lowell revisited Europe (he had been here before) to qualify himself especially in the French and German languages. And to this period, as has been remarked, we doubtless owe those exhaustive studies, the fruits of which come out in the excellent essays on Lessing and Rousseau—

"papers," says Mr. Haweis, "which impress the reader, without apparent effort or design, with the feeling that the writer knows so much more than he cares to say."

Even to name merely all Mr. Lowell's books in the order of their publication would occupy more space than we care to dispose to that purpose here. The best of them have been republished in this country by Macmillan & Co. of London, and include, in addition to those we have already named—*The Vision of Sir Launfal, Conversations on some Old Poets, A Fable for Critics, Life of Keats, Fireside Travels, The President's Policy, Democracy, and other Addresses*, etc.; the "etc." covering such as are not so familiar to British readers.

As an essayist Lowell takes a higher place than as a poet—in the serious mood at least. Much of his serious verse, though it reveals passages of rare power and beauty, is markedly unequal, and occasionally is marred by incongruities that are readily apparent. The following lines, for example, contain as many mixed metaphors as even Sir Boyle Roche might have been able to introduce in the same space :—

"New occasions teach new duties; Time makes ancient good uncouth.
They must upward still and onward who would keep abreast of truth.
Lo, before us gleam *her camp-fires;* we ourselves must pilgrims be—
Launch our *Mayflower*, and steer boldly through the desperate *winter sea.*
Nor attempt the Future's portal with the Past's *blood-rusted key.*"

And when he seriously declares President Lincoln to have been a

"Kindly, earnest, brave, foreseeing *man*,
New birth of our new soil, the first *American*,"

we cannot help smiling at the poverty of his poetical ingenuity. We say this while conscious of the exceeding beauty and exceptional power, and almost perfect form, of some of his shorter poems. Than the "First Snowfall" there are few more touching—few so nearly perfect little sets of verses:—

"The snow had begun in the gloaming,
And busily all the night
Had been heaping field and highway
With a silence deep and white.

Every pine, and fir, and hemlock,
Wore ermine too dear for an earl,
And the poorest twig on the elm tree
Was ridged inch deep with pearl.

From sheds new-roofed with Carrara
Came chanticleer's muffled crow,
And stiff rails were softened to swan's-down,
And still fluttered down the snow.

I stood and watched by the window
The noiseless work of the sky,
And the sudden flurries of snow-birds,
Like brown leaves whirling by.

I thought of a mound in sweet Auburn,
Where a little headstone stood;
How the flakes were folding it gently,
As did robins the babes in the wood.

Up spoke our own little Mabel,
Saying, 'Father, who makes it snow?'
And I told of the good All-father,
Who cares for us here below.

Again I looked at the snowfall,
And thought of the leaden sky
That arched o'er our first great sorrow,
When that mound was heaped so high.

I remembered the gradual patience
That fell from that cloud like snow,
Flake by flake, healing and hiding
The scar of our deep-plunged woe.

And again to the child I whispered,
'The snow that husheth all,
Darling, the merciful Father
Alone can make it fall!'

Then, with eyes that saw not, I kissed her;
And she, kissing back, could not know
That *my* kiss was given to her sister,
Folded close under deepening snow."

Some of his sonnets are about as nearly perfect as it is possible to make productions of the kind. His "Vision of Sir Launfal" may be read a thousand times and never cease to charm. His pathetic and suggestive little poem, "She Came and Went," is classic literature. His intense little poem, "After the Burial," too—so vastly human—once read, will claim a lasting lodgment in every heart that has known the sorrowful loss of his dearest friend. Who that has sat in shadow of the tomb has not felt the bitter truth of these lines? :—

"Yes, faith is a goodly anchor;
When skies are sweet as a psalm,
At the bows it lolls so stalwart,
In bluff, broad-shouldered calm.
. . . . . .
But after the shipwreck, tell me
What help in its iron thews,
Still true to the broken hawser,
Deep down among sea-weed and ooze?

In the breaking gulfs of sorrow,
When the helpless feet stretch out
And find in the depth of darkness
No footing so solid as doubt.

Then better one spar of memory,
One broken plank of the past,
That one human heart may cling to,
Though hopeless of shore at last!

To the spirit its splendid conjectures,
To the flesh its sweet despair,
Its tears o'er the thin-worn locket,
With its anguish of deathless hair.

Immortal? I feel it and know it,
Who doubts it of such as she?
But that is the pang's very secret—
Immortal away from me.

There's a narrow ridge in the graveyard
Would scarce stay a child in his race,
But to me and my thought it is wider
Than the star-sown vague of Space.

Your logic, my friend, is perfect,
Your morals most drearily true;
But since the earth clashed on *her* coffin,
I keep hearing that, and not you.

Console if you will, I can bear it;
'Tis a well-meant alms of breath;
But not all the preaching since Adam
Has made death other than death.

It is pagan; but wait till you feel it,
That jar of our earth, that dull shock,
When the ploughshare of deeper passion
Tears down to our primitive rock.

Communion in spirit! Forgive me,
But I who am earthly and weak,
Would give all my incomes from dreamland,
For a touch of her hand on my cheek."

A good poet, he is, however, as I have said, a better essayist—his forward position as such being firmly assured. But it is not even here that his great strength lies. Lowell will ever be best remembered as a humorous satirist — as the author of the *Biglow Papers*. It was here that he made a reputation for himself which was instantly established on both sides of the Atlantic; here that he made his big and indelible mark on the literature of the world, for there can scarcely come a time when the *Biglow Papers* will not be read and appreciated. Certainly they will survive with the writings of Rabelais and Cervantes. The Mexican War in 1845, which the author regarded as "a national crime," set these witty and wise satires agoing. They were first printed serially in the *Boston Courier*, beginning in the issue of June 1846, and, directed as they were against slavery, and revealing great wit, scholarship, poetic vim, and penetrating knowledge of human nature, they gave a tremendous stimulus to the cause of Freedom and right-doing in America, and far beyond it.

Looking at war, irrespective of motive, Hosea Biglow says, and to his words we all say Amen :—

"Ez for war, I call it murder—
There you hev it plain an' flat;
I don't want to go no furder
Than my Testyment fer that;
God hez said so plump an' fairly
It's ez long ez it is broad,
An' you've got to git up airly
Ef you want to take in God.

'Taint your eppyletts an' feathers
Makes the thing a grain more right;
'Taint afollerin' your bell-wethers
Will excuse you in His sight;

Ef you take a sword an' dror it,
An' go stick a feller thru,
Gov'ment ain't to answer for it:
God'll send the bill to you.

Wat's the use o' meetin'-going
Every Sabbath, wet or dry;
Ef it's right to go a-mowin'
Feller-men like oats an' rye?
I dunno but wat it's poorty
Trainin' round in bobtail coats—
But it's curus Christian dooty,
This ere cuttin' folks's throats."

But a word here as to the plan of the "Biglows," which is altogether excellent. The poems are ostensibly the productions of Hosea Biglow and Hiel o' Preston Sawin, and are edited with an introduction, notes, glossary, index, and "notices of an unimportant press" by Homer Wilbur, A.M., pastor of the first church in Jaalam, and (prospective) member of many literary, learned, and scientific societies. And whoever would enjoy the full flavour of the humour of the work must not skip the introduction and notes, etc., which stand related to the poems in almost as much importance as the postscript does to a woman's letter. The poem from which quotation has already been made is addressed to the army recruiting officer, on his appearance in Boston in quest of volunteers, and to whom the author says still more directly, from a personal point of view:—

"Jest go home an' ask our Nancy
Wether I'd be sech a goose
Ez to jine ye—guess you'd fancy
The eternal bung was loose!

She wants me for home consumption,
Let alone the hay's to mow;

If you're after folks o' gumption,
You've a darned long row to hoe.

Take them editors that's crowin'
Like a cockerel three months old,
Don't ketch any on 'em goin',
Though they be so blasted bold."

No, not likely! Though they would encourage the Southern leaders to seize a part of Mexico for the forming of new Slave States, and incite all America to join them, they would not go themselves and expose their skins to the bullet. Hosea would fight if he had a just cause, as we shall see; but to join a crusade in the interests of slavery—he was too far-seeing and humane for that :—

"W'y, it's jest ez clear ez figgers,
Clear ez one and one make two,
Chaps that make black slaves o' niggers
Want to make w'ite slaves o' you."

This is the foresight! Hereinafter will be found the larger human view :—

"Laborin' man an' woman
Hev one glory an' one shame,
Ev'rything that's done inhuman
Injers all on 'em the same."

Satirising the pernicious sentiment expressed in the cry of "Our country, right or wrong," he has this fling at "John P. Robinson," as the individual representative of a sentiment much in vogue during a period of election :—

"Governor B. is a sensible man;
He stays to his home an' looks after his folks;
He draws his furrer as straight as he can,
An' into nobody's tatter-patch pokes;
But John P.
Robinson, he
Sez he won't vote for Governor B.

My ! ain't it terrible ? W'at shall we du ?
We can't never choose him, o' course—that's flat ;
Guess we shall hev to come round (don't you ?)
An' go in for thunder an' guns, an' all that ;
For John P.
Robinson, he
Sez he won't vote for Governor B.

. . . . . .

We were gittin' on nicely up here in our village,
With good old idees o' wut's right an' wut ain't,
We kind o' thought Christ went agin war an' pillage,
An' that eppyletts worn't the best mark of a saint ;
But John P.
Robinson, he
Sez this kind o' thing's an exploded idee.

. . . . . .

Parson Wilbur sez *he* never heard in his life
That the apostles rigged out in their swaller-tail coats,
An' marched round in front of a drum an' a fife,
To get some on 'em office and some on 'em votes ;
But John P.
Robinson, he
Sez they didn't know everything down in Judee."

It was the quotation of that last verse in the House of Commons in 1847 that first drew general attention in this country to the satire of Lowell, "A hit, a very palpable hit." The whole poem had an amazing influence on the spirit of the time at its production ; and surely nothing of the kind that has provided nails for fixing arguments has been more frequently used on the political "stump" in recent years.

The ballad of John C. Calhoun, who, as Mr. Homer Wilbur very pungently says, "seems to think that the light of the nineteenth century is to be put out as soon as he tinkles his little cow-bell curfew," is severely smart. And we have all listened to the shuffling

political humbug who fulminates on the "fence" in this way .—

"Ez to my princerples, I glory
In hevin' nothin' o' the sort;
I ain't a Whig, I ain't a Tory,
I'm jest a candidate, in short."

Satires, mainly levelled at the upholders of slavery, as I have said, there was yet scarcely any cant, hypocrisy, or meanness in politics, the pulpit, or the press that the *Biglow Papers* did not hit at—and, hitting, slay. Making the "Pious Editor" limn his features with his own hand, we find this graphic picture :—

THE PIOUS EDITOR'S CREED.

I du believe in Freedom's cause,
Ez fur away ez Payris is:
I love to see her stick her claws
In them infarnal Phayrisees;
It's wal enough agin a king
To dror resolves an' triggers,—
But libbaty's a kind o' thing
Thet don't agree with niggers.

I du believe the people want
A tax on teas an' coffees,
Thet nothin' aint extravygunt,—
Purvidin' I'm in office;
Fer I hev loved my country sence,
My eye-teeth filled their sockets,
An' Uncle Sam I reverence,
Partic'larly his pockets.

I du believe in *any* plan
O' levyin' the taxes,
Ez long ez, like a lumberman,
I git jest wut I axes:
I go free-trade thru thick an' thin,
Because it kind o' rouses
The folks to vote,—an' keeps us in
Our quiet custom-houses.

I du believe it's wise an' good
To sen' out furrin missions,
Thet is, on sartin understood
An' orthydox conditions ;—
I mean nine thousan' dolls. per ann.,
Nine thousan' more fer outfit,
An' me to recommend a man
The place 'ould jest about fit.

I du believe in special ways
O' prayin' an' convartin' ;
The bread comes back in many days,
An' buttered, tu, fer sartin ;
I mean in preyin' till one busts
On wut the party chooses,
An' in convarting public trusts
To very privit uses.

I du believe hard coin the stuff
Fer 'lectioneers to spout on ;
The people's ollers soft enough
To make hard money out on ;
Dear Uncle Sam pervides fer his,
An' gives a good-sized junk to all,—
I don't care *how* hard money is,
Ez long ez mine's paid punctooal.

I du believe with all my soul
In the great Press's freedom,
To pint the people to the goal
An' in the traces lead 'em ;
Palsied the arm thet forges yokes
At my fat contracts squintin',
An' withered be the nose thet pokes
Inter the Gov'ment printin' !

I du believe thet I should give
Wut's his'n unto Cæsar,
Fer it's by him I move an' live,
Frum him my bread an' cheese air ;

I du believe thet all o' me
  Doth bear his superscription,—
Will, conscience, honor, honesty,
  An' things o' thet description.

I du believe in prayer an' praise
  To him thet hez the grantin'
O' jobs,—in every thin' thet pays,
  But most of all in CANTIN';
This doth my cup with marcies fill,
  This lays all thought o' sin to rest,—
I *don't* believe in princerple,
  But O, I *du* in interest.

I du believe in bein' this
  Or thet, ez it may happen
One way or t'other hendiest is
  To ketch the people nappin';
It aint by princerples nor men
  My preudunt course is steadied,—
I scent wich pays the best, an' then
  Go into it baldheaded.

I du believe thet holdin' slaves
  Comes nat'ral tu a Presidunt,
Let 'lone the rowdedow it saves
  To hev a wal-broke precedunt
Fer any office, small or gret,
  I couldn't ax with no face,
Without I'd ben, thru dry an' wet,
  Th' unrizzest kind o' doughface.

I du believe wutever trash
  'll keep the people in blindness,—
Thet we the Mexicuns can thrash
  Right inter brotherly kindness,
Thet bombshells, grape, an' powder 'n' ball
  Air good-will's strongest magnets,
Thet peace, to make it stick at all,
  Must be druv in with bagnets.

In short, I firmly du believe
In Humbug generally,
Fer it's a thing thet I perceive
To hev a solid vally ;
This heth my faithful shepherd ben,
In pasturs sweet heth led me,
An' this'll keep the people green
To feed ez they hev fed me.

How Mr. Lowell executed the function and responsibility of the *true* editor we learn from his introduction to the above poem. He says :—

"I know of no so responsible position as that of a public journalist. The editor of our day bears the same relation to his time that a clerk bore to the age before the invention of printing. Indeed, the position which he holds is that which the clergyman should hold even now. But the clergyman chooses to walk off to the extreme edge of the world, and to throw such seed as he has clear over into the darkness which he calls the Next Life. As if *next* did not mean *nearest*, and as if any life were nearer than that immediately present one which boils and eddies all round him at the caucus, the ratification meeting, and the polls! Who taught him to exhort men to prepare for eternity, and for some future era of which the present forms no integral part? The furrow which Time is even now turning runs through the Everlasting, and in that must he plant, or nowhere. Yet he would fain believe and teach that we are going to have more of eternity than we have now. This *going* of his is like that of the auctioneer, on which *gone* follows before we have made up our minds to bid—in which manner, not three months back, I lost an excellent copy of Chappelow on Job. So it has come to pass that the preacher, instead of being a living force, has faded into an emblematic

figure at christenings, weddings, and funerals. Or, if he exercises any other function, it is as keeper and feeder of certain theologic dogmas, which, when occasion offers, he unkennels with a *staboy !* 'to bark and bite as 'tis their nature to,' whence that reproach of *odium theologicum* has risen.

"Meanwhile, see what a pulpit the editor mounts daily, sometimes with a congregation of fifty thousand within reach of his voice, and never so much as a nodder, even, among them. And from what a Bible can he chose his text—a Bible which needs no translation, and which no priestcraft can shut and clasp from the laity—the open volume of the world, upon which, with a pen of sunshine and destroying fire, the inspired Present is even now writing the annals of God ! Methinks the editor who should understand his calling, and be equal thereto, would truly deserve that title which Homer bestows upon princes. He would be the Moses of our nineteenth century ; and whereas the old Sinai, silent now, is but a common mountain stared at by the elegant tourist and crawled over by the hammering geologist, he must find his tables of the new law here among factories and cities in this Wilderness of Sin (Numbers xxxiii. 12) called Progress of Civilisation, and be the captain of our Exodus into the Canaan of a truer social order."

But to return. In the author of the "Biglows" the hitherto despised Abolitionists, the subjects of jibes and sneers, found a champion who turned the batteries of the scholar, in unequalled wit, merriment, and ridicule, upon their enemies, and the enemies of the free Republic, by exposing to the laughter of the world the sneaking attitude of compromising politicians and of those who wore the livery of heaven in the cause of

human slavery. When, by-and-by, the terrible conflict between North and South ensued, which was to decide the abolition or continued traffic in human life, it was then that the full force of the "Biglows" became apparent. And it is not claiming more for them than is due to say that they wielded a greater power in determining the issue than all the other literary efforts of the time combined. This country, pursuing interest rather than principle—to her everlasting shame—gave her moral support to the upholders of slavery. Our sympathy was with the British bondholders, not with the slaves and those who fought to secure their freedom. Of course, it could be argued all the other way, but Lowell is not far off the mark when he says :—

> "I tell ye, England's law, on sea and land,
> Hez allers been, 'I've got the heaviest hand.'
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Of all the sarse that I can call to mind,
> England *doos* make the most unpleasant kind ;
> It's you're the sinner allers, she's the saint ;
> W'at's good's all English, all that isn't aint ;
> W'at profits her is allers right an' just,
> An' if you don't read Scriptur so, you must.
> She's praised herself until she fairly thinks
> There ain't no light in Natur when she winks."

In "Jonathan to John" the sarcasm is less severe, as if subdued by the recollection of the relationship and disappointment at "John's" position ; but it is not less effectual on that account. Says Jonathan :—

> "It don't seem hardly right, John,
> When both my hands was full,
> To stump me to a fight, John—
> Your cousin, too, John Bull.

Ole Uncle S., sez he, 'I guess
We know it now,' sez he;
'The lion's paw is all the law,
Accordin' to J. B.,
Thet's fit for you an' me.'

. . . . . .

Why talk so driffle big, John,
Of honour, when it meant
You didn't care a fig, John,
But jest for *ten per cent?*
Ole Uncle S., sez he, 'I guess
He's like the rest,' sez he;
'When all is done, it's number one
That's nearest to J. B.
Ez well ez you an' me.'

. . . . . .

We know we've got a cause, John,
Thet's honest, just, an' true;
We thought 'twould win applause, John,
Ef nowhere else, from you.
Ole Uncle S., sez he, 'I guess
His love of right,' sez he,
'Hangs by a rotten fibre o' cotton;
There's natur' in J. B.
Ez well ez you an' me.'"

Then the question comes—

"Shall it be love or hate, John?
It's you that's to decide;
Ain't your bond held by Fate, John,
Like all the world's beside?
Ole Uncle S., sez he, 'I guess
Wise men forgive,' sez he,
'But not forget, an' sometime yet
That truth may strike J. B.
Ez well ez you an' me.'

God means to make this land, John,
Clear throo from sea to sea,
Believe an' understand, John,
The worth o' being free.

Ole Uncle S., sez he, 'I guess,
God's price is high,' sez he;
'But nothin' else than wot he sells
Wears out, an' that J. B.
May learn like you an' me.'"

Lowell, as the whole world knows, felt with painful keenness the attitude and conduct of Britain when these lines were penned. But he lived to forgive us, to love our institutions, and to honour our laws. He has been loved here in return, and his death in 1891 was perhaps not more generally mourned in America than it was in this country.

When Lord Sherbrooke went on a visit to the United States in 1856 he made the acquaintance of Mr. Lowell on board the steamer. The latter gave him a dreadful account of the steamers on the Mississippi. On one occasion, he said, the boiler exploded, and the captain was thrown to a considerable distance and fell through the roof of a house some way off, alighting in a cobbler's workshop. The cobbler immediately said he expected him to pay for the injured roof, which the captain allowed was reasonable, and asked how much. The cobbler replied, "Ten dollars for the damage, including the fright." But the captain pulled out a five-dollar note and handed it to him, declaring that he "*never paid more on such occasions.*"

As a sample of Lowell's humour, *sans satire*, nothing finer exists than his ballad of "The Courtin'." Dr. Underwood, the poet's personal friend, describes it beautifully as "one of those miraculous trifles which only genius creates, and which the hearts of the Yankee race will ever preserve. You may smile," he continues, "at the simple pair, but if you reflect you will see that their 'courtin'' is a part of the never-ending, ever-

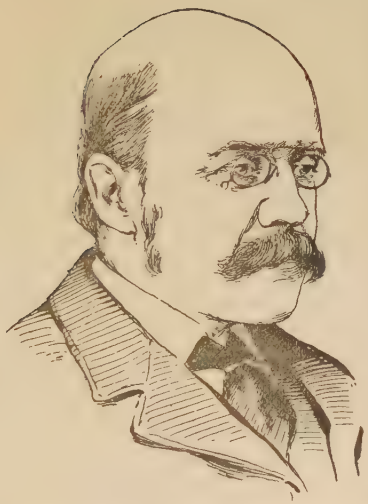
beginning drama, the same in palace as in farmhouse, to which no son or daughter of Eve can be indifferent. There are naturally many characteristic local touches; but how explain 'crook-necks' to people who haven't the sun to ripen squashes? or 'queen's-arm' to those who never saw the treasured flint-lock Queen Anne muskets once borne in the French and Indian wars?"

THE COURTIN'.

God makes sech nights, all white an' still, fur'z you can look or listen,
Moonshine an' snow on field an' hill, all silence an' all glisten.
Zekel crep' up, quite unbeknown, an' peeked in thru the winder,
An' there sot Huldy, all alone, with no one nigh to hinder.
The wa'nut logs shot sparkles out toward the pootiest, bless her!
An' lettle flames danced all about the china on the dresser.
Agin the chimbley crock-necks hung, an' in amongst 'em rusted,
The ole queen's-arm that gran'ther Young fetch'd back from Concord busted,
The very room coz she was in, seemed warm from floor to ceilin',
An' she looked full ez rosy agin ez the apples she was peelin',
'Twas kin' o' "kingdom come" to look on such a blessèd cretur,
A dog-rose blushin' to a brook, ain't modester nor sweeter.
He was six foot o' man, A1, clean grit an' human natur,
None couldn't quicker pitch a ton, nor dror a furrer straighter.
He'd sparked it with full twenty gals, he'd squired 'em, danced 'em, druv 'em,
First this one, and then thet, by spells—all is he couldn't love 'em.
But long o' her, his veins 'ould run all crinkly, like curled maple,
The side she breshed felt full o' sun, ez a south slope in Ap'il.
She thought no v'ice hed sech a swing as hisn in the choir;
My! when he made "Old Hundred" ring, she knowed the Lord was nigher.
An' she'd blush scarlit, right in prayer, when her new meetin'-bunnet
Felt, somehow, thru its crown, a pair o' blue eyes sot upon it.
That night, I tell ye, she looked some! she seemed to 've gut a new soul,

For she felt sartin-sure he'd come, down to her very shoe-sole.
She heerd a foot, an' knowed it, tu, a-raspin' on the scraper,—
All ways to once her feelins flew, like sparks in burnt-up paper.
He kin' o' loitered on the mat, some doubtful o' the sekle,
His heart kep' goin' pity-pat, but hern went "pity-Zekle."
An' yit, she gin her cheer a jerk, as though she wished him furder,
An' on her apples kep' to work, parin' away like murder.
"You want to see my Pa, I s'pose?" "Wall—no—I come designin'"——
"To see my Ma? She's sprinklin' clo'es, agin to-morrer's i'nin."
To say why gals acts so or so, or don't, would be presumin';
Mebby to mean yes, an' say no, comes nateral to women.
He stood a spell on one foot fust, then stood a spell on t'other,
An' on which one he felt the wust, he couldn't ha' told ye, nuther.
Says he, "I'd better call again." Says she, "Think likely, Mister."
That last word pricked him like a pin, an'—wal, he up an' kissed her.
When Ma, bimeby, upon 'em slips, Huldy sot, pale as ashes,
All kin o' smily roun' the lips, an' teary roun' the lashes.
For she was jest the quiet kind, whose naturs never vary,
Like streams that keep a summer mind, snow-hid in Janoorary.
The blood clost roun', her heart felt glued too tight for all expressin'.
Till mother see how matters stood, an' gin 'em both her blessin'.
Then her red come back, like the tide down to the Bay o' Fundy;
An' all I know is, they was cried in meetin' come nex' Sunday.

MAX ADELER.



FOR real, hearty, healthy, honest, side-splitting humour, in my opinion, there is not one of all the large crowd of American funny men that excels this writer. As the author of *Out of the Hurly-Burly*, *An Old Fogey*, *Elbow Room*, and *Random Shots*, he has earned a just title to fame; and a fame, forsooth, that should not diminish for many a long day. His is not the sly seductive humour of Holmes. He has not the literary polish and power, and knows not the secret of Lowell's stinging humourous sarcasm. He has little in common with Mark Twain, and less with Artemus Ward. Max Adeler has quite a way of his own. He writes with no other purpose than to create a laugh—than to make fun—but "laughter holding both its sides," continually follows the gyrations of his pen. One looking at the little serious-faced man who has written the books above-named—the elder Hood had not a more solemn countenance—would be puzzled to know where all his humour comes from.

And it puzzles us more to be told by one who knows him intimately that he is more than half-ashamed of his dabblings in comic literature, and has no desire for fame as a humorous author.

Mark Twain in his *Library of American Humour* does not so much as mention his name. Perhaps he declined the honour of a place there. No particulars of his life have hitherto been given to the world. All that the public has known about him personally, either in America or here, has been that his real name is Charles Heber Clark. To this I can only add that he resides in Philadelphia, where he edits—of all things in the world—a paper in connection with textile manufacture, and that he has given up his humourous writing altogether. It is to a friend of the author in this country that I am indebted for the portrait that appears here, as also for the few particulars of his life.

To speak only of the writings of Max Adeler, then, —and we have been interested in the man solely because of these—the mind reverts at once to *Out of the Hurly-Burly*, the first, the best known, and most successful of all his books. It forms, as he tells us, an attempt to construct a book of popular innocent amusement; an effort to give pleasure to sensible grown people without offering entertainment to children and idiots, and was not designed to reform anything on earth but the personal fortunes of the author. In a fit of humourous irony he dedicates the work to "the intelligent compositor, the unconscious humourist to whose habit of perpetrating felicitous absurdities the world is indebted for laughter that is worth a thousand groans."

"It was he," Max says, "who put into type an article of mine which contained the remark, 'Filtration is

sometimes accomplished with the assistance of albumen,' and transformed it into 'Flirtation is sometimes accomplished with the resistance of aldermen.' It was he who caused me to misquote the poet's inquiry, so that I propounded to the world the appalling conundrum, 'Where are the dead, the *varnished* dead?' And it was his glorious tendency to make the sublime convulsively ridiculous that rejected the line in a poem of mine which declared that a 'comet swept o'er the heavens with its trailing skirt, and substituted the idea that a 'Count slept in the haymow in a travelling shirt.'"

English readers of the book are warned that they will find the orthography differing in some respects from that to which they have been accustomed. And he adds, "I have adhered throughout to the spelling given in the dictionary of Noah Webster, which is the standard authority in the United States. The people of this land are, as it were, all under Noah's spell, and I have naturally followed the common practice. It is worth while to mention this fact so that those who are dissatisfied can find fault with Noah and not with me. He can bear harsh criticism more serenely than I can, for he is dead."

Max Adeler's is the humour of motion and incident more particularly than that of almost any other American writer. He never resorts to the trick of grotesque spelling so commonly practised by Artemus Ward and Josh Billings to create a laugh. He has not patience for finical work of that sort. His imagination is too active to allow his pen to trifle and cut capers of its own. One comic situation succeeds another in his mind as rapidly as a working panorama, and it is as much as the hand can do to keep pace with the imagination. It

is this rapid movement that makes his writing so enlivening, so refreshing, so delightsome. You cannot read his pages slowly, nor can you read them low in to yourself. You read him faster than you know, and are reading aloud sometimes when you don't know it, and are frequently moved to physical excitements which would be amusing if you could be conscious of them. I know a young man who broke two chairs before he got through the *Hurly-Burly* for the first time. He was a lodger then, and had to pay for their repair, but did so with good grace. It was a small price, he said, for the value received. Of course it is invariably the first reading of racy humour of the Max Adeler stamp that is most enjoyable, although there are chapters in this book that one can return to and enjoy again and again—such as that one which relates the pathetic incident in the career of young Chubb, and the other which details the lively experiences of Colonel Bangs, subsequent to his engagement of a poetical sub-editor to whom he had relegated the duty of working up the agony column of the *Morning Argus*.

When Chubb the elder, we are told, returned from Europe he brought with him from Geneva a miniature musical box, long, and very narrow, and altogether of hardly greater dimensions than a large pocket-knife. The instrument played four cheerful tunes for the benefit of the Chubb family, and they enjoyed it. Young Henry enjoyed it to such an extent that one day, just after the machine had been wound up ready for action, he got to sucking the end of it, and in a moment of inadvertence it slipped, and he swallowed it. Henry kept his secret in his soul, and in his stomach also. But that evening at the supper table he had eaten but one mouthful of bread when strains of wild, mysterious

music were suddenly wafted from under the table. The family made an effort to discover whence the sounds came, while young Henry, filled with agony and remorse and bread and tunes, asserted his belief that the music came from the cellar, where the servant girl was concealed with a harp.

But the truth could not be disguised for ever, and that very night, when the family was at prayers, Henry all at once began to hiccough, and the music-box started off with "Way down upon the Swanee River," with variations. Chubb the elder rose from his knees and grasped his son kindly but firmly by the hair and shook him up, and inquired what he meant by such conduct. Henry asserted that he was practising something for a Sunday school celebration, which old Chubb intimated was a singularly thin explanation. Then they tried to get up the music-box, and every time they would seize Henry by the legs and shake him over the sofa cushion, the instrument would give a fresh spurt and joyously grind out, "Listen to the mocking bird," or "Thou'lt never cease to love." Their most desperate efforts to dislodge the thing were unavailing. It would not budge. To say that the unfortunate victim of the disaster was made miserable by his condition would be to express in the feeblest manner the state of his mind. The more music there was in his stomach, the wilder and more completely chaotic became the discord in his soul.

As likely as not it would occur that while he lay asleep in the middle of the night the works would begin to revolve, and would play "Home, Sweet Home" for two or three hours, unless the peg happened to slip, when the cylinder would switch back again to "Way down upon the Swanee River," and would rattle out that tune with variations and fragments of the scales,

until Henry's brother would kick him out of bed in wild despair and sit on him in a vain effort to subdue the serenade, which, however, invariably proceeded with fresh vigour when subjected to unusual pressure. When Henry Chubb went to church, it frequently occurred that in the very midst of the most solemn portion of the sermon he would feel a gentle disturbance under the lower button of his jacket, and presently the undigested engine would give a preliminary buzz, and then reel off "Listen to the mocking bird" and "Thou'lt never cease to love," and scales and exercises until the clergyman would stop, and the sexton would tack up the aisle and clutch the unhappy Mr. Chubb by the collar, and send him down the passage to the accompaniment of "Home, Sweet Home," or some other tune. But the end came at last. In course of time the gastric juices triumphed; the music-box went all to pieces, and the miserable boy found peace.

The humour there is entirely due to exaggeration. The passage is thus a choice example of the writer of whom we are treating. All along we find his fun arising just from the exaggerated accounts of common-place incidents. But the humour is none the less genuine, and is by no means less appetising on that account. Yea; we like it all the better.

There are many, and, no doubt, well-meaning people too, who will think and say with Mrs. Adeler that it is not precisely proper to treat such a solemn subject as death with so much levity as appears in the account of the poet Slimmer's efforts to embellish the obituary notices in the *Morning Argus*. The memoriam verses so commonly seen in the agony columns of some of the weekly journals, though, doubtless, about the most wretched attempts at poetry to be met with in print,

frequently proceed from a sincere and sorely crushed heart. At the same time, they would not be there unless they were paid for at the ordinary advertisement rate, and they are most frequently used for the purpose of parading a grief which is shallow or insincere—as a means—oh the pity and the shame of it!—of trying to convince the world that the advertiser is mourning, while he really is not. The true mourner does not wear his heart on his sleeve in this way; he does not advertise his grief; he hides it deep down in his own heart, as far from the eye of the world as he is able to keep it. Max Adeler, then, we may feel assured, has no wish to treat with levity the solemn circumstance of death. He does not mean to mock the true mourner, but turns the edge of his humorous satire against the ostentatious display of a shallow sentimentality. According to the story, Colonel Bangs, observing the disposition of persons who were bereaved of their relatives to give expression to their feelings in verse, thought it would "boom" the *Argus*—that it would make it a popular vehicle for the conveyance to the public of notices of deaths—and so greatly increase his circulation and the number of advertisements—if to each obituary paragraph he could add a gratuitous and appropriate verse of poetry.

"You understand, Mr. Slimmer," said the Colonel, "that when the death of an individual is announced I want you, as it were, to cheer the members of the afflicted family with the resources of your noble art. I wish you to throw yourself, as you might say, into their situation, and to give them a few lines about the deceased which will seem to be the expression of the emotion which agitates the breasts of the bereaved."

"To lighten the gloom in a certain sense," said Slimmer.

"Precisely," exclaimed Bangs. "Take a joyous view of death, touch the heart-strings of the afflicted with a tender hand, and endeavour to divert their minds from contemplation of——"

"Refrain from despondency, I suppose, and lift their minds to——"

"Just so!" said Bangs; "and at the same time combine elevating sentiment with such practical information as you can obtain from the advertisement; throw a glamour of poesy, for instance, over the commonplace details of the everyday life of the deceased."

"I think I can do it first-rate," said Slimmer.

The poet accordingly set to work, and the subjoined are a few of his most startling and realistic efforts:—

"The death-angel smote Alexander M'Glue,
And gave him protracted repose;
He wore a checked shirt, and a number nine shoe,
And had a pink wart on his nose.

No doubt he is happier dwelling in space,
Over there on the evergreen shore;
His friends are informed his funeral takes place
Precisely a quarter-past four."

II.

"Willie had a purple monkey climbing on a yellow stick,
And when he sucked the paint all off it made him deathly sick;
And in his latest hours he clasped that monkey in his hand,
And bade good-bye to earth and went into a better land.
Oh! no more he'll shoot his sister with his little wooden gun;
No more he'll twist the pussy's tail, and make her youl, for fun.
The pussy's tail now stands out straight; the gun is laid aside;
The monkey does not jump around since little Willie died."

III.

"Four doctors tackled Johnny Smith—
They blistered and they bled him;
With squills and anti-bilious pills
And ipecac they fed him.
They stirred him up with calomel,
And tried to move his liver;
But all in vain—his little soul
Was wafted o'er the River."

For details of the scene that occurred in Bangs's office subsequent to the appearance of these and several other complimentary effusions in the columns of the *Morning Argus* I must refer the reader to the pages of the *Hurly-Burly* itself. It is enough to state here that the experiment was of such a salutary character that it was not repeated. Bangs got most thoroughly and deservedly cudgelled and thrashed by his insulted and enraged clients, male and female; and the *Argus* had, perforce, to resume its customary aspect of dreariness.

So, you see, the humour of the skit—though daring a little—is not without its moral.

But Max Adeler is most thoroughly enjoyable when he sets himself to be funny only. And how very funny he can be is not better revealed anywhere in all his writing than in the subjoined story of "A Wooden Leg," which, in justice to the author, must be quoted entire:—

A Wooden Leg.

"Mr. Brown, you don't want to buy a first-rate wooden leg, do you? I've got one that I've been wearing for two or three years, and I want to sell it. I'm hard up for money; and although I'm attached to that leg, I'm willing to part with it so's I kin get the necessaries of life. Legs are all well enough; they are handy

to have around the house, and all that; but a man must attend to his stomach if he has to walk about on the small of his back. Now I'm going to make you an offer. That leg is Fairchild's patent; steel-springs, India-rubber joints, elastic toes and everything, and it's in better order now than it was when I bought it. It'll be a comfort to any man. It's the most luxurious leg I ever came across. If bliss can ever be reached by a man this side of the tomb, it belongs to the person that gets that leg on and feels the consciousness creeping over his soul that it is his. Consequently, I say that when I offer it to you I'm doing a personal favour; and I think I see you jump at the chance, and want to clinch the bargain before I mention—you'll hardly believe it, I know—that I'll actually knock that leg down to you at 400 dollars. Four hundred, did I say? I meant 600; but let it stand. I never back out when I make an offer; but it's just throwing that leg away—it is, indeed."

"But I don't want an artificial leg," said Brown.

"The beautiful thing about the limb," said the stranger, pulling up his trousers and displaying the article, "is that it is reliable. You kin depend on it. It's always there. Some legs that I have seen were treacherous—most always some of the springs bursting out, or the joints working backward, or the toes turning down and ketching in things. Regular frauds. But it's almost pathetic the way that leg goes on year in and year out, like an old and faithful friend, never knowing an ache or a pain, no rheumatism, nor any such foolishness as that, but always good-natured and ready to go out of its way to oblige you. A man feels like a man when he gets such a thing under him. Talk about your kings and emperors and millionaires, and all

that sort of nonsense! Which of 'em's got a leg like that? Which of 'em kin unscrew his knee-pan, and look at the gum thingamajigs in his calf? Which of 'em kin leave his leg downstairs in the entry on the hat-rack, and go to bed with only one cold foot? Why, it's enough to make one of them monarchs sick to think of such a convenience. But they can't help it. There's only one man can buy that leg, and that's you. I want you to have it so bad that I'll deed it to you for fifty dollars down. Awful, isn't it? Just throwing it away; but take it, take it, if it does make my heart bleed to see it go out of the family."

"Really, I have no use for such a thing," said Mr. Brown.

"You can't think," urged the stranger, "what a benediction a leg like that is in a family. When you don't want to walk with it, it comes into play for the children to ride horsey on; or you kin take it off and stir the fire with it in a way that would depress the spirits of a man with a real leg. It makes the most efficient potato-masher you ever saw. Work it from the second joint, and let the knee swing loose; you kin tack carpets perfectly splendid with the heel; and when a cat sees it coming at him from the winder, he just adjourns, *sine die,* and goes down off the fence screaming. Now, you're probably afeard of dogs. When you see one approaching, you always change your base. I don't blame you; I used to be that way before I lost my home-made leg. But you fix yourself with this artificial extremity, and then what do you care for dogs? If a million of 'em come at you, what's the odds? You merely stand still and smile, and throw out your spare leg, and let 'em chaw, let 'em fool with that as much as they've a mind to, and howl and carry

on, for you don't care. An' that's the reason why I say that when I reflect on how imposing you'd be as the owner of such a leg, I feel like saying, that if you insist on offering only a dollar and a half for it, why, take it; it's yours. I'm not the kinder man to stand on trifles. I'll take it off and wrap it up in a paper for you; shall I?"

"I'm sorry," said Brown, "but the fact is, I have no use for it. I've got two good legs already. If I ever lose one, why, maybe then I'll——"

"I don't think you exactly catch my idea on the subject," said the stranger. "Now, any man kin have a neat-and-muscle leg; they're as common as dirt. It's disgusting how monotonous people are about such things. But I take you for a man who wants to be original. You have style about you. You go it alone, as it were. Now, if I had your peculiarities, do you know what I'd do? I'd get a leg snatched off some way, so's I could walk around on this one. Or, if you hate to go to the expense of amputation, why not get your pantaloons altered, and mount this beautiful work of art just as you stand? A centipede, a mere ridiculous insect, has half a bushel of legs, and why can't a man, the greatest creature on earth, own three? You go around this community on three legs, and your fortune's made. People will go wild over you as the three-legged grocer; the nation will glory in you; Europe will hear of you; you will be heard of from pole to pole. It'll build up your business. People'll flock from everywheres to see you, and you'll make your sugar and cheese and things fairly hum. Look at it as an advertisement! Look at it in any way you please, and there's money in it—there's glory, there's immortality. I think I see you now moving around over this

floor with your old legs working as usual, and this one going clickety-click along with 'em, making music for you all the time, and attracting attention in a way to fill a man's heart with rapture. Now, look at it that way; and if it strikes you, I'll tell you what I'll do; I'll actually swap that imperishable leg off to you for two pounds of water crackers, and a tin cupful of Jamaica rum. Is it a go?"

Then Brown weighed out the crackers, gave him an awful drink of rum, and told him if he would take them as a present and quit he would confer a favour. And he did. After emptying the crackers in his pockets, and smacking his lips over the rum, he went to the door, and as he opened it said,

"Good-bye. But if you ever really do want a leg Old Reliable is ready for you; it's yours. I consider that you've got a mortgage on it, and you kin foreclose at any time. I dedicate this leg to you. My will shall mention it; and if you don't need it when I die, I'm going to have it put in the savings bank to draw interest until you check it out."

That is a piece of very clever and admirably sustained humourous writing—the real Max Adeler—and can be relied on, when decently delivered, to hold a concert or fireside party in a continual paroxysm of laughter. After reading it one is not surprised to know that the author's books have circulated extensively on both sides of the Atlantic. The wonder would be if they had not. It will, however, strike the reader as strange that the writer should be half ashamed of his dabblings in comic literature, and have no desire for fame as a humourous author. He has won fame; and it will be his, and will abide with him, whether he would have it or not.

And now, one more slice of his excellent quality, and let it be the case for Mrs. Fogg, in

Wanted—A Divorce.

One day Mr. and Mrs. Fogg knocked at the door of Colonel Coffin's law office, and then filed in, Mrs. Fogg in advance. Mr. Fogg, the reader may care to know, was a subdued, weak-eyed and timid person. He had the air of a victim of perpetual tyranny—of a man who had been ruthlessly and remorselessly sat upon until his spirit was wholly gone, and Mrs. Fogg looked as if she might have been his despot. She opened the conversation by addressing the lawyer:

"Colonel, I have called to engage you as my counsel in a divorce suit against Mr. Fogg. I have resolved to separate from him, to sunder our ties, and henceforth to live apart."

"Indeed!" replied the Colonel; "I'm sorry to hear that. What's the matter? Has he been beating and ill-treating you?"

"Beating!" exclaimed Mrs. Fogg, disdainfully; "I should think not! I should like him to try it!"

"Maria, let me——" interposed Mr. Fogg, mildly.

"Now, Wilberforce," she exclaimed, interrupting him, "you remain quiet; I will explain this matter to Colonel Coffin. You see, Colonel, Mr. Fogg is eccentric beyond endurance. He goes on continually in a manner that will certainly drive me to distraction. I can stand it no longer. We *must* be cut asunder. For years, Colonel, Wilberforce has been attempting to learn to play upon the flute. He has no more idea of music than a crow, but he *will* try to learn. He has been practising upon the flute since 1862, and he has learned a portion of but one tune—'Nelly Bly.' He can

play but four notes, 'Nelly Bly shuts——,' and there he stops. He has practised these four notes for fourteen years. He plays them upon the porch in the evening; he blows them out from the garret; he stands out in the yard and puffs them; he has frequently risen in the night and seized his flute and played 'Nel-ly Bly shuts' for hours, until I had to scream to relieve my feelings."

"Now, Maria," said Mr. Fogg, "you know that I can play as far as 'shuts her eye'—six notes in all. I learned them in the early part of June."

"Very well, now; it's of no consequence. Don't interrupt me. This is bad enough. I submitted to it because I loved him. But on Tuesday, while I was watching him through the crack of the parlour-door, I saw him wink twice at my chamber-maid; I saw him distinctly."

"Maria," shrieked Fogg, "this is scandalous, you know very well that I am suffering from a nervous affection of the eyelids."

"Wilberforce, hush! In addition to this wickedness, Colonel, Mr. Fogg is becoming so absent-minded that he torments my life; he makes me utterly wretched. Four times now has he brought his umbrella to bed with him, and scratched me by joggling it around with the sharp points of the ribs toward me. What on earth he means I cannot imagine! He said he thought somehow it was the baby, but that is so preposterous that I can hardly believe him."

"Why can't you? Don't you remember perfectly well that I emptied a bottle of milk into the umbrella twice? Would I have done that if I hadn't thought it was the baby?"

"There now, Wilberforce! that's enough for you.

Do let me have a chance to talk! And, Colonel, the real baby he treats in the most malignant manner. A few days ago he mesmerized it secretly, and scared me so that I am ill from the effects of it yet. I thought the dear child would sleep for ever. And in addition to this, I came in on Thursday and found that he had laid the large family Bible on the darling's stomach. It was at the last gasp. I thought it would never recover."

"Maria, didn't I tell you I gave it to the child to play with to keep him quiet?"

"Mr. Fogg, will you please let me get a word in edge-ways? Our elder children, too, he is simply ruining. He teaches them the most pernicious and hurtful doctrines. He told Johnny the other day that Madagascar was an island in the Peruvian Ocean off the coast of Illinois, and that a walrus was a kind of race-horse used by the Caribbees. And our oldest girl told me that he instructed her that Polycarp fought the battle of Waterloo for the purpose of defeating the Saracens."

"Not the Saracens, Maria; Lucy misunderstood—"

"Wilberforce, I wish you would hush! His general treatment of me was scandalous. He was constantly taking my teeth for the purpose of knocking around the spigot in the bath-tub at night when the baby wanted a drink, and only last week he took both sets after I had gone to bed, propped them apart, baited them with cheese, and caught two horrid mice before morning. I was so hurt by his behaviour that I drank some laudanum for the purpose of committing suicide, and then Mr. Fogg borrowed a pump in at Knott's drug store and pumped me out twice in such a rude manner that I have felt hollow ever since."

"I did it for kindness, Maria."

"Don't talk of kindness to me, Wilberforce, after your conduct. And, Colonel, one night last week, after I had retired, Mr. Fogg sat down in the room below and determined to see if it were true that a candle could be shot through a board from a gun. He dropped a lighted candle in his gun, and of course it exploded. It came up through the floor and made a large spot of grease upon the ceiling of my room, nearly scaring me to death, and filling my legs full of bird-shot."

"Maria, I asked you to believe that I forgot about the candle being lighted. I did it in a fit of absent-mindedness."

"Do go into the other room, Wilberforce, or else hold your tongue. So, Colonel, I want to get a divorce. Existence is unendurable to me, the lives of my children are in danger. I cannot remain in such slavery any longer. Can you release me?"

Colonel Coffin said he would think it over and give her an answer in a week. His idea was to give her time to think better of it. So then she told Wilberforce to put on his hat; and when he had done so, he followed her meekly out, and they went home. It is believed in the neighbourhood that she has concluded to stick to him for a while longer.

M. QUAD.

MR. CHARLES B. LEWIS, who is better known in this country by his pen-name of "M. Quad," and has been still more extensively enjoyed, both here and in America, through the medium of his unsigned writings describing the vagaries of "His Honour and Bijah," "The Lime-Kiln Club," "Mr. and Mrs. Bowser," and, more recently, "The Arizona Kicker," is a writer of great power and discrimination, as well as of apparent inexhaustible resource. As a newspaper man pure and simple—for he has put his name to no book that I know of—the amount of "copy" which his hand supplies between one year's end and another must be perfectly amazing. In the *New York Sun* and elsewhere he writes stories and sketches under his own name, chiefly of frontier life, with weekly regularity; and he is continually breaking out in a new place, anonymously, and always with surprising effect.

For more than twenty years has his pen been wagging at the rate we have indicated, and still there is no sign of reduced production—no evidence of failing power. Of course, it would be wrong to estimate an author merely by the quantity of his writing, though this of itself might be astonishing, and in Mr. Lewis's case it is not necessary to claim quantity as his chief title to fame. Few authors who have written so well have held their own so evenly in different styles through such a long course of years. Much of the work that has appeared under his own name, as well as under the signature of "M. Quad," has been of a realistic, or serious and pathetic kind, all excellent in its way; and it proves the wonderful variety of his genius that, while he has a just claim to recognition as a serious writer, his humorous creations — "The Lime Kiln Club" of itself—entitle him to a place amongst the first eleven humourists of his country. The leading characters in the society of coloured American citizens which forms the "Lime Kiln Club"—Brother Gardner the president; Trustee Pullback, Sir Isaac Walpole, Elder Toots, Giveadam Jones, and others—have all been drawn by a master hand, and are household names in millions of homes. "Bijah," of the Criminal Court, is also a rare natural character, who is fitted to his situation like a well-made glove. He is, like Artemus Ward's snake, "a most amoozin' little cuss." The same may be said of "Mr. and Mrs. Bowser," though these characters have been drawn with less originality, being moulded to some extent on the late Mr. Stanley Huntly's "Mr. and Mrs. Spoopendyke," which has been imitated with less or more success by several writers.

Mr. Lewis is an Eastern man, who, though he has written so much about it, has never visited the Far

West. He was born about fifty years ago in Liverpool, O., but at an early age was taken to Lansing, Michigan. Here he worked for about twelve years in a printing-office, during which time he also managed to complete a course of study at the Agricultural College. During the War—or part of it—he served in the Sixth Michigan Cavalry, and was with General Custer in some of his famous movements. Some time after the War he made his way to Detroit, and soon gained a place on the staff of *The Free Press*.

But altogether, "Quad's" career, according to a recent and apparently veracious account, has been a curious one. For some time after he joined the staff of the *Detroit Free Press*, more than twenty years ago, he acted as criminal reporter for that paper, though as a reporter he was never a success. Facts, he said, always embarrassed him. That may be so; but it was while he acted in this capacity, no doubt, that he conceived the idea of "His Honour and Bijah," the description of whose eccentricities first brought their creator into fame. By and by he became interested in horses; then he became a detective. Ultimately he developed into a fireman, but his career in this capacity was short.

The last fire he turned out to filled him so full of experience that he resigned. It happened in this way. There was a small blaze in a bakery. In the other end of the building, separated from the fire by a two-foot wall, were several barrels of flour. "Quad" got an axe, broke the door, and commenced to roll the barrels out into the muddy street. The captain hallooed to him to stop that, as there was absolutely no danger, but "Quad" heard not. He had a duty to perform, and that was to save that flour. As a means of making his orders effective, the captain told his men to turn the

stream on to the vigilant and unheeding officer. There was a bundle of muddy clothes and tangled hair and things that was pushed along the street before the forceful streams of water. That was "M. Quad" performing his last act as a member of a fire brigade.

"A queer thing occurred to me once," said Lewis, to one of his compatriots on the staff of the *Free Press*, the same to whose pen we are indebted for the account of the fire brigade incident. "I started from Lansing, Michigan, to go to Maysville, Ky., to be local editor of *The Bulletin*. I remember of changing cars at Owosso, but don't remember, and never did, anything that occurred for over a hundred days afterwards. I wrote a letter to my wife during that time, and evidently did so in a book-store. I must have changed cars at Detroit and Toledo, and transferred to the steamer *Mangolia* at Cincinnati. The steamer blew up, my head was crushed in, I was badly scalded, and I got pneumonia from falling into the river. I lay in a hospital in Cincinnati eighty-four days. I thought I was in the mountains of Switzerland, and that two guards would not let me get to a spring where I could get a drink. One day I sat up in bed and saw my brother-in-law, who asked me how I felt. 'I am all right; why shouldn't I be?' I asked. He then told me that I had been hurt, and how, but I knew nothing about it. I commenced a suit against the steamboat company for 50,000 dols., but finally settled it satisfactorily out of Court."

A published account of this explosion, written by Lewis himself, was what attracted the attention of *The Free Press* manager, and was the means of getting the writer on the staff of which he has for so many years been a distinguished member. Personally of a

retiring nature, even although his friends tell some amusing stories about his eccentricities, Mr. Lewis is known intimately to few people in Detroit or out of it. One of his freaks some time ago, we are told, was in painting his house. He changed the colour on it three or four times a year. Sometimes even before the paint was dry he would order it to be painted a different style. Once it would look like a barber's pole, and three months after it would resemble a hearse as much as anything.

Mainly, however, the man has concealed himself behind his work; and further here we will look at his work only, which really is the thing that makes the man of any interest to us.

I have already hinted at the naturalness of much of Mr. Lewis's writing—at his deft power of touching off individual characters. When he began writing the sketches purporting to be extracts from *The Arizona Kicker*, it was generally believed that there really was such a paper out on the south-western frontier of the United States, and that the quotations were genuine. There are towns in Arizona called Tombstone, and Deadman, and to those who knew this it did not appear as anything very extraordinary although there should be a newspaper in the same territory called *The Kicker*. Accordingly, for a good long while Mr. Lewis's entertaining paragraphs were extensively copied by both American and British journals, and duly credited to *The Arizona Kicker*, the editor of which was the Mayor of the town, the proprietor of a gambling-house, and the best shot in the neighbourhood, who killed his man almost every week, and planted his victims in a cemetery specially purchased and laid out for their reception. Here are a

couple of *The Kicker* tit-bits; an inch of example is better than an ell of explanation:—

"The editor of the *Kicker* (who is ourself) has a private graveyard containing a quarter of an acre of ground. Up to the present date there are ten mounds in the enclosure, each representing a person who died very suddenly within a few feet of us. As we have been to the expense of over 400 dols. for funeral outfits, and at least 150 dols. more in sodding the ground and planting shrubs and flowers, we think we can be pardoned for any little display of egotism on our part. Our plot is one of the sights of the town, and is generally the first thing a stranger inquires after. We are now expending 50 dols. to improve the highway connecting the town and the plot, and travel will soon be made more convenient. The point lately raised by some of the boys is this—His Honour the Mayor (who is ourself) is handy with the gun, and will likely shoot some one within a short time, in the line of duty. In case he does, should his victim go in as No. 11 in the *Kicker* graveyard, or would he be privileged to start a new one on his own hook? The matter is being generally discussed, and has aroused great interest, and we shall submit it to an attorney this week for a legal opinion."

. . . . . .

"When Steve Taylor was appointed town-marshal, the *Kicker* advanced the opinion that he was weak in the back, and would 'crawl' if he got into a tight place. Steve and his friends were down on us for the announcement, and we believe it was Steve himself who fired a bullet into the office one night a few weeks ago, and shot the pendulum off our eight-day clock. The affair of Sunday night proved the correctness of our

opinion regarding Steve's sand. A bad man from Zuni broke loose all of a sudden, and began firing right and left. Steve happened to be within twenty feet of him, but the "ping" of bullets started him off down the street like an antelope. His Honour the Mayor (who is ourself) was in church and heard the firing. He ran straight for the crowd, sized up the situation at a glance, and next moment he had the bad man by the neck. The fellow was quickly disarmed, and within five minutes of his first shot he was lying on the floor of the calaboose, and wondering which side of the United States had tipped up on him. Monday morning he was so anxious to get out of town that he was willing to go without his guns, which will be sold at auction for the benefit of the street improvement fund. Steve Taylor has handed in his resignation and begged our pardon. He thought he had sand, but it was a mistake. He will open a carpenter shop on Cactus Street, and his advertisement will appear in our next issue."

The whole is a happy burlesque of the "fighting editor" of the Far West, whose rampaging is perhaps more notorious than real. But let that be as it may, we shall quit the troubled scene of the *Kicker* editor's operations, and follow our author into a description of a symposium of the "Lime Kiln Club," where we will find ourselves in more delightsome company. But first let us glance at some of the rules which regulate the conduct of business in this august assembly: —

1. The hour for opening the regular meetings will be eight o'clock.

2. No clay pipes over one year old can be smoked in the library without special permission.

3. The eating of peanuts, popcorn, candy, &c., during sessions is calculated to divert attention from the

solemnity of the occasion, and is therefore discouraged.

4. Members who bring their dogs with them must be prepared for the worst.

5. Any member found with his hat on after the triangle has sounded will be fined not less than 400 dols.

6. All religious and political discussion is strictly forbidden. Members are also asked to abstain from telling fish stories or relating adventures with rattlesnakes and Indians.

7. When it becomes positively necessary for a member to remove his shoes to scratch his chilblains or rub a whetstone over his corns, he must retire to the anteroom in a quiet and unassuming manner.

There was an unusually large turn-out at the regular Saturday night meeting, and the half-dozen Chinese lanterns which Giveadam Jones had purchased at his own expense and hung around the hall, produced what Samuel Shin termed "a spectacled affect of the wildest disorder."

"Gem'len," said the President, as he softly rose up and calmly looked down on the shining pates of Sir Isaac Walpole and Elder Toots, "dar am some few things it would be well fur you to disreckolect :—

"De man who sots on de fence when de sun shines will be diggin' fur grub when it rains.

"Industry may make de back ache, but she fills de stomach an' kivers de feet.

"De man who wants satisfaxshun by law will satisfy de lawyers sooner dan hisself.

"Knockin' a man down bekase he differs wid you doan' prove de truf of your own posishun.

"De less a man knows de mo' anxious he seems to make de public believe he am a statesman.

"Let us now attack de reg'lar programmy and destroy de bizness which has called us togeder."

The Secretary called attention to the following paragraph in the *New York Sun* :—

"Danforth Smith, a coloured resident of Hoboken, was yesterday fined twenty dollars and sent to jail for three months, for brutal treatment of his mule. He is said to be a member of Brother Gardner's Lime Kiln Club."

"Does his cognomen appear on our rolls?" asked the President.

"Yes, sah. He jined dis club one y'ar ago, an' was perticklerly recommended fur his child-like disposition."

"You will at once notify him dat he am suspended fur six months—not fur wollopin' de mule, exactly, but mo' bekase he was caught in de act and sent to jail. I owns a mule myself, and while I strive to be placid an' forgivin' an' charitable, dar am occasions when I has de ole women lock me up down cellar an' stand at the doah wid a shot gun; if she didn't, I should jump in on dat mule an' pound him till life was distinct. While I sympathise wid Brudder Smith, he mus' stand suspended in deference to public opinyun."

Giveadam Jones offered a resolution to the effect that the club adopt Prof. Wiggins' weather predictions up to January 1.

Shindig Watkins objected. He didn't believe in binding the club to patronise any particular prophet's weather. Elder Toots favoured the idea. Wiggins had predicted a mild winter, and if there was any mild winter lying around loose he wanted one. The Rev. Penstock opposed the resolution. Wiggins had predicted a rainy summer and he had purchased a new pork barrel to put under the eaves on the strength of

it. The bottom of the barrel had scarcely been wet this season.

"Gem'len," said the President, with a desire to cut short further debate, "I reckon dis club had better take the weather as we find it. De prudent man will pile up de wood, stock in de meat and tators, and depend upon Providence fur an airly spring. De resolution am declar'd outer order."

An official letter, signed by Lord Deadbroke Johnsing, was received from Lancaster, Pa., asking that a society in that district known as "The Setters" be granted a charter as a branch of the Lime-Kiln Club. "The Setters" were a body composed of the cream of coloured society. The object was to broaden and expand the mind by holding down chairs, boxes, and barrels in the corner grocery. One of the chief aims was to turn out accomplished liars, and another was to give wives a chance to support their husbands by washing.

"I doan' reckon we am aching fur any sich crowd," observed Brother Gardner. "De Secretary will gently but firmly frow out a hint in his answer dat we am chuck full o' great men jist at present, while de market has a downward tendency."

These "Lime-Kiln Club" sketches were run regularly in the *Detroit Free Press* through a period of several years, and a very entertaining book might be made of a judicious selection from them. The pithy, worldly-wise, and frequently edifying observations of "Brother Gardner," acting as a sort of moral cement, would raise and maintain the work above the level of a merely funny book, which, alas! can rarely be read with pleasure more than once. The President is quite a "Josh Billings" in ebony. He has the same quick faculty for

penetrating the outward gloss of the insincere mind, and the same graphic humour in exposing all sham and imposition. We can catch a smack of the writer's gift in this way also elsewhere in his writings. It is particularly manifest in that paper where, as in the character of "M. Quad," he is found discanting on "Ipitaphs and Such."

"I took a walk," says Quad, "through the cemetery yesterday, and I have been in a brown study ever since. Cushman's tombstone stands up there a foot above all the rest, and on it I read—'Let us meet him in Heaven.' I don't know who ordered that epitaph, but I used to live beside Cushman. Many's the time I kept him from pounding his wife when he was drunk, and I went bail for him when he stole horse and waggon, and was on the jury which sent him to State prison for stealing hay. He was killed in a saloon row, and if I ever 'meet him in heaven' I shall ask him whether he climbed over the wall or tunnelled under it.

Davison has a very nice headstone, with a pair of clasped hands on it, and these words :—

> 'Too pure for earth,
> Gone to his Heavenly rest.'

I was much affected on reading the lines, yet I couldn't help but wonder if he repented of selling me a bogus lottery ticket, of setting fire to the railroad sheds, of stealing a carpet from the Methodist Church, and of several other little matters which caused him to make the acquaintance of the jailor. It is possible that he was 'too pure for earth,' but I know men who will bet ten dollars on it.

"Deacon Warner's tombstone bears a stern, solemn look, just as he used to, and it says :—'Heaven's gates will open wide to all who are like him.' Perhaps they

will. Whether they do or not, I shall always remember how he sold me a blind horse when I had sore eyes; how he raised house-rent on the widows; how a Justice fined him twenty-five dollars for thrashing a poor found-boy; how he put chicory in his coffee and hay-seed in his tea; and how regularly he used to pass the contribution box to the rest of us, but forgot to put in anything himself. If the gates of Heaven are going to be held wide open for those of Deacon Warner's class, I want to put in my time in Michigan."

Of course it is notorious for tombstones to record of the sleeper, as Byron says,

"Not what he was, but what he should have been;"

and perhaps Mr. Lewis's observations in point are no more than a grotesque paraphrase of the great English poet's assertion. That they were not written in spleen we know for certain. In all "M. Quad's" creations there is not a trace of ill-nature. He is a humourist with a keen eye to the weaknesses of humanity, of which he makes much capital in his writing, but there is not a drop of bitter juice in his whole body, and not a line that has come from his pen may be calculated to give a pang other than that of delight to a living soul.

But hold! we must revisit the "Lime-Kiln Club," and see the shining lights of Paradise Hall through one more of their regular Saturday night's symposiums:—

"Gem'lin," began Brother Gardner, "I hev received a letter from Washington axin' me to furnish de guv'-ment wid sich statisticks regardin' de cull'd race as we hev thus fur bin able to gather since de organizashun of de Lime-Kiln Club. De secretary has prepared an' will for'd de followin' valuable slices of informashun:

"1. Gin a darkey a cocked hat an' a tin sword, an'

de noise of a drum, an' you kin lead him anywhar' you will.

"2. We can't see dat de color am bleachin' out any.

"3. We doan' know dat de black man has growed any wuss doorin' de las' twenty y'ars, an' we can't prove dat he has growed any better.

"4. Truth, honesty an' industry am three great jewels hidden in de groun'. Looks like a heap of cull'd folks war' too lazy to dig down an' find em.

"5. Our religun am about de same, an' our pollyticks all mixed up.

"6. De inventive genius of de race hasn't turned so much to mechanism an' art as to plannin' how to make one day's work bring in a libin' fur de rest of de week.

"In case any of de members know of any furder facks b'aring on de issue I should like to h'ar from him."

Sir Isaac Walpole thought he could see a great improvement in social etiquette. Coloured brothers who formerly heaved brick-bats at him now raised their hats as they passed, and women who once went barefoot in their shoes now wore stockings costing six bits.

Giveadam Jones had seen a great change in his race in ten years. When a black man who never owned a fowl in his life had chicken pie three times a week the year 'round there was a combination of genius and progress which could not be kept down nor drowned out.

Waydown Beebe thought the colored man was more industrious than in former years. He had known lots of them to work hard all day for insignificant wages to get money to patronize policy shops and purchase lottery tickets.

Several other choice bits of information were cheer-

fully tendered, and the secretary was instructed to incorporate them and write his report in red ink.

"To boil de matter down inter syrup," added the President, "de cull'd man has got his liberty, but am hungry an' ragged fo'-fifths of de time. He has got de ballot, but de white folks has got de offices. He has got civil rights, but he hain't got de cash for a seat in de parkay circle or de palace kyar. Let us purceed to de bizness which has compounded us together. De Hon. Higginbottom Lawless, of Kosciusko, Miss., am present in de aunty room an' burnin' to deliber his celebrated address on 'Sentiment.' He arrove heah three or four days ago, an' has finished my las' bar'l of apples, worn my Sunday coat right along, an' will be a deadhead on me till he can spoke dis piece an' cotch a mixed freight train gwine to Toledo. De committee will escort him, an' if dat water-pail am upsot or any lamps knocked down doorin' his delibery de guilty wretch or wretches will receive a lesson dat will remain solid for a hundred y'ars."

The Hon. Lawless appeared with a pair of red mittens in one hand and a lemon in the other, and such was his placidity of mind that when he bit into one of the mittens in place of the lemon he never even changed color. He sized up five feet and six inches, intelligent expression, head cast in the shape of a pear, and feet large enough to trample an onion bed out of sight. He mounted the platform like a steer climbing a side-hill, bowed right and left in response to the applause, and quietly began:

"My frens, I cannot dispress de pleasure an' gratificashun which I feel to fin' myself standin' heah under de sacred shingles of Paradise Hall—a structure whose name am a household word whareber de English lan-

guage greets de ear. (Applause.) I would rather stan' heah dan be buried under a $10,000 monument. (Cheers.)

"De subjick ob my address am Sentiment. What am sentiment? Whar' do we git it, an' what am it worf by de pound when de market am not oberstocked? I answer dat sentiment am a sort o' 'lasses an' mush surroundin' de heart. In some cases it hardens up an' turns to stun, while in oders it thins out until de heart fairly floats in a pond o' sweetness. (Applause.) Sentiment has considerabul to do wid ebery ackshun in our eberyday life. It am bizness when you start out to borroy a pan of flour or a basket ob taters. It am sentiment dat causes a naybur to lend, instead of demandin' spot cash. (Wild applause from Judge Cadaver.)

"Bizness acktuates de lazy an' de shiftless to sot out an' beg cold vittles an' ole clothes an' dimes an' quarters. Sentiment acktuates women to shed tears ober 'em an' stock 'em up wid 'nuff to loaf on fur 'nother month. When we have a kickin' hoss our sentiment am 'pealed to. We argy dat the safty of our loved ones requires us to trade dat anamile off to some preacher who wants a perfeckly reliable hoss. Dat's one kind of sentiment. When we buy an excurshun ticket to Niagra Falls, an' reach de grand cataract arter a thirty hours' sweat on cattle cars, de immense waste of water 'peals to annoder sort o' sentiment. When we luv we reveal another phase of sentiment. If de gal am high-toned an' rich de sentiment am all solid. If she am only avierage, an' in debt fur her las' spring hat, de sentiment am purty thin an' won't last longer dan de first bill fur meat comes in. (Cries of 'You bet!')

"My frens, sentiment writes poetry wid one han' an' tans de backs of de chill'en wid de oder. It guides our thoughts to frens ober de sea, an' sends ole clothes to relashuns in Wisconsin. It makes us shed tears fur de dead, an' yit warns us to cut de undertaker's bill down 20 per cent. Sentiment tells us to luv our feller-men, an' yit wispers to us to lock our doahs an' place torpedoes in our hen-roosts. (Groans). I have bin lookin' into de matter fur de las' forty-eight y'ars, an' I has cum to de conclushon dat it was a wise thing to purvide de human race wid sentiment. If it had bin lef' out by any accident in de mixin', de bes' man among us wouldn't have got a bid if put up at aucshun along with a lot ob fence-posts. I could talk to you fur three straight weeks on dis subjeck, but obsarvin dat my half hour am up, I will chop off right heah, an' hope dat it may be my pleasure at some fucher day to meet you agin. Any pusson who wants his fortune told will fin' me in de aunty room fur de next two hours." (Cheers and yells, and such vigorous stamping that three lamps and twenty-two feet of stovepipe fell down, and Brother Gardner adjourned the meeting.)

The following is an exquisite bit of character-writing, thoroughly American, too:—

One Long, Lingering Look.

They were holding the west-bound express at Reno for the east-bound to pass, and after a while a rough-looking character came sauntering into the waiting-room and asked of the ticket-agent—

"Wall, how long afore this train leaves?"

"Can't tell," was the curt reply.

The man went away, but in the course of half-an-hour he returned to inquire:

"Heard anythin' yit?"

"No."

"Can't you tell when this train will pull out?"

"No, sir! If you are here when the train goes you can go with it. It's no use coming here to bother me."

"I don't want to bother you nor nobody else," slowly replied the questioner, "but mebbe you don't understand how I'm fixed. I'm Prairie Sam's pardner."

"Well?"

"Sam got into a leetle shootin' scrape up town this forenoon."

"Yes."

"And about an hour ago the boys turned out and pulled Sam up to a limb."

"Did, eh? I hadn't heard of that. Why didn't they pull you up with him?"

"The blamed limb wasn't stout 'nuff to hold the both of us, and they was too tired to hunt fur another. They gim me two hours to leave town in. One of the hours has gone, and I'm kinder anxus about the other. I kin buy a hoss and ride out if that train won't be here in time, but I'd a heap raythor take the kyars. I don't want to bother you, but under the sarcumstances——"

"I see. Well, the train'll be here in half an hour."

"Good. That gives me thirty minits to play on, and I won't look fur a hoss. Nice weather this?"

"Beautiful weather for a lynching-bee!"

"Of course. That's what I meant. I'll jest step up and take one long, lingerin' look at Sam, and then ketch the train!"

At the present time (1896) the creator of "The Lime Kiln Club" is running no fewer than about half-a-dozen different series of humorous character-sketches in the pages of the *Detroit Free Press*, including "Possum

Sketches," "Mountain Sketches," "Bowery Talks," and "Abe Crofoot," etc., each and all of which are eagerly read by the numerous readers of that ever popular and toothsome journal. These, mostly in an early stage of their development, it would be perhaps unfair to quote from, even if they yielded themselves more freely to the process of sampling than they do, and as a parting specimen here I will present instead the author's touching little essay on

Some Self-made Men.

Every city has a certain few citizens of whom it is proud, because of their long and victorious struggle against the frowns of fortune. Detroit is no exception to the rule. As the modesty of the individuals here given would have prevented them writing themselves up for any of the Harpers' publications, no matter what discount was allowed for geographical situation, the reader can congratulate himself that he would never have learned the histories of some of them but for the enterprise of the present writer.

James McGee came to this city forty-nine years ago, with only seven cents in his pocket. By strict attention to business, he has not only been able to increase his capital one-half, but is able to rent a house at $15 per month, where the landlord don't know who he is. At one time he was owing nearly $600, such was his business energy; but at this writing he doesn't owe a cent, the debts having outlawed.

John Tweezer came here twenty-one years ago, having less than forty cents about him. He saw a fine opening here for a cotton factory and he sees one yet. He believes he might have cleared $500,000 by establishing a large factory of the kind, but he didn't start

one. His habits of frugality, industry, and perseverance at length attracted the attention of a gentleman connected with the House of Correction, and he took him in to assist in running the chair business. Although Mr. Tweezer didn't lose a cent he came out of the partnership business without a dollar. But he had a spirit that could not be put down, and prevailed upon a man to give him another start. He is now able to ride in a carriage—being coachman for a family in the western part of the city. He has never had the honour of having his wood-cut appear in *The Phrenological Journal*, but the Chief of Police has on file a very nice photograph of him.

Harry Swipes took up his residence here nearly fifteen years ago, living for the first three months in the brown stone shanty on the corner of Beaubien and Clinton-streets. He hadn't a cent in his pockets, no change of clothing, had to contribute from his earnings to the support of a mother and seven children, and any man of ordinary spirits would have been discouraged. Mr. Swipes was not of that metal. He saw that a boiler-shop would pay a large profit, and so he tried to borrow ten dollars to start a saloon, but as no one could see where he was going to use so much money he didn't get it. He then went to work as a labourer, and has moved in that sphere ever since, being able this spring to have the city assessed $70 on an alley sewer behind his landlord's house. He has never taken an office in his life, because he can't get one, and he looks upon political struggles with scorn and disdain.

J. H. R. N. Slags came here when Detroit was a town of a few thousand inhabitants, and he brought all his initials with him. After considerable discussion, he decided that property would soon double, and would

have purchased several blocks if holders could have been induced to do a credit business. He consequently didn't purchase, and has had to make his fortune other ways. He decided never to tell the truth under any circumstances, and has stuck to this decision with remarkable pertinacity and force of character, and to this fact he owes most of his wealth—that is, the wealth his grandmother is going to leave him. He was in the habit of handling considerable money, but had to quit when the alarm-bell money-drawer was invented, as it then became too risky.

Samuel Striker came here only ten years ago, and has already succeeded in outrunning three different policemen, and in keeping clear of seven or eight documents issued from various Courts. Most any man would give up in despair and go across to Windsor, but Mr. Striker is bound to keep his residence in Detroit, and can't be persuaded that Jackson is any locality for business.

John Quirk settled here fifteen years ago. He was as remarkable then as now for his great decision of character. He had been in Detroit but three hours before he decided to marry a brown stone house and a half interest in a bank. Unfortunately the young lady was endowed with the same great decision, and Mr. Quirk didn't marry. He is now driving a cart, patiently waiting his time.

Septimus Blank came here in indigent circumstances. He soon saw that there was a chance to speculate in real estate, and wrote to his uncle to lend him $15,000. His uncle replied that he hadn't even fifteen cents, and thus the speculation fell through. However, Mr. Blank could not be put back by such a trifle as $15,000, or even 15 cents, and has worked his way against the

tide, until last year he was able to draw a cheque for $30,000. He drew it over a countryman, and got $18 on the strength of it, and is now spending a season in the Adirondacks, or some where else out of the reach of policemen.

Solomon Hope is the last on the list. He moved into Detroit on a hand sled, and the first house he lived in was a stable. He has been many times heard to say that the sole food for the first year was nothing but corn meal and molasses. Our citizens all know where the post-office is? Well, Mr. Hope don't own that building, nor never will. He started a small grocery store on Woodward Avenue, and by strict honesty and the utmost economy, succeeded in getting out of town one night with every cent he ever made, and some which he didn't make. It is due, however, to him to state that he shortly returned, and compromised the matter by stealing a horse, and getting where his creditors couldn't put up any job upon him.

WILL CARLETON.

THE people of this country have for a score of years been familiar with the writings of Will Carleton, although few, or no, particulars of the author's life have been laid before them. The inhabitants of every town and village in which popular entertainments have been wont to be given have received delight again and again from the recital of his charming ballads, "Betsy and I are Out" and "How Betsy and I made Up," "The Ride of Jenny M'Neal," "Over the Hill to the Poor-house," and its sequel, "Over the Hill from the Poor-house," "Gone with a Handsomer Man," "The Editor's Guests," "Our Travelled Parson," etc., than the first of which, coupled with the second and presented together as one entertainment, there is no "spouting piece" on the concert boards that may be so freely depended upon to hold a mixed audience in delighted thrall.

From an appreciative account of Mr. Carleton's career which appeared about ten years ago in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, we learn that "Betsy and I" was

first printed in the *Toledo Blade*, to which paper it had been gratuitously contributed, the writer, being then so little known, deeming it not wise to diminish the chances of his venture by freighting it with a fixed price. As might have been expected, its success was immediate and phenomenal. It was copied into newspapers all over the country; public readers took it up, and it was soon being heard recited, more or less badly, from every lyceum platform in America. And while people were inquiring, "Who is the author?" individuals never heard from before or since coolly stepped forward and claimed it.

Subsequent productions of kindred matter, however, and the early publication of *Farm Ballads*, in which "Betsy and I" occupies the place of honour, denoted and fixed the personal identity of the author, and proved that Will Carleton was his real name, and not a pseudonym, as most had fancied. Yes, his real name, and one that was to become still more familiar to them by and by.

Like so many men of letters who have risen to distinction in America—Nathaniel Hawthorne, James Russell Lowell, and others—Will Carleton comes of old English stock by both sides of the house. He was born at his father's farm, near Hudson, in Lenawee County, Michigan, in 1845, and was bred to the usual life of a farmer's boy. Not the most likely training, perhaps, for a future journalist and lecturer; but here no doubt his impressionable mind received many of the pictures of rural life and manners which he has since reproduced with such graphic and telling effect in his poems. An early desire for knowledge incited him, while still attending the district school, to study Latin, algebra, and geometry at home, and afterward to walk

five miles daily through Michigan snows and mud for the privilege of attending a high school. Anything that is worth having is worth toiling hard for, and an education wrung from circumstances so disadvantageous was esteemed at its true worth. His father, to his everlasting honour be it stated, encouraged the boy in his pursuit of knowledge, and it is gratifying to know that he lived to see him achieve fame by the work of his pen.

In 1865, Mr. Carleton, with the view of adopting a journalistic career, entered on a course of study at Hillsdale College. Graduating in 1869, he joined the editorial staff of an agricultural paper in Chicago, and later became editor of the *Detroit Weekly Tribune*. Journalism was destined, however, not to hold him long in its halter. He had a wider field to occupy, and one in which he could display his faculties to better advantage. In a year or two he retired from the editor's chair in order to devote himself to authorship, study, and travel, since which he has become famous as a narrative poet, and has won golden opinions as lecturer and reciter of his own pieces over the length and breadth of the American Continent.

Though the first of his pieces to achieve the wider popularity, "Betsy and I" was by no means our author's first poetical effort. During his "Junior" vacation, in the summer of 1868, he wrote at Aurora, Illinois, a poem for the political campaign, entitled "Fax." For an impartial test of its merits, and, perhaps, also to save himself from humiliation in case of failure, says the writer in *Harper's* already alluded to, he first read it to an audience in a neighbouring town where he was unknown. Only about a dozen persons were present, and it was noticeable that, instead of

competing for front seats, they exhibited some wariness in keeping near the door, through which escape from too heavy an infliction of poetry might be possible without disturbing the meeting. So far from quietly stealing away, however, they remained to tender the reader a vote of thanks, and the result was that the poem was not only repeated the next night to a crowded house, but became widely popular throughout the campaign. At his graduation in June 1869, he delivered his poem, "Rifts in the Clouds," which was favourably received by the people and press of the State; and he wrote for Decoration Day, 1870, the touching and expressive verses, "Cover them Over," which have been recited or sung on Decoration Days all over the country ever since. Here is the first verse, which will suggest the others:—

"Cover them over with beautiful flowers;
Deck them with garlands, those brothers of ours;
Lying so silent, by night and by day,
Sleeping the years of their manhood away.
Years they had marked for the joys of the brave;
Years they must waste in the sloth of the grave.
All the bright laurels they fought to make bloom
Fell to the earth when they went to the tomb.
Give them the meed they have won in the past;
Give them the honours their merits forecast;
Give them the chaplets they won in the strife;
Give them the laurels they lost with their life.
Cover them over—yes, cover them over—
Parent and husband, and brother, and lover.
Crown in your heart these dead heroes of ours,
And cover them over with beautiful flowers."

Other short poems from his pen appeared in the newspapers, but it was not, as has already been said, until the appearance of "Betsy and I are Out," early in

the year 1871, that his name became extensively known, and he won the title to be ranked among the humourists of his country. When this poem had become popular it was reproduced with illustrations in *Harper's Weekly*, to which the author shortly afterwards contributed its sequel, "How Betsy and I made Up," which, unlike most sequels, is not a weak imitation of the original, but a continuation of the story, written with the same humour, sincerity, and force. It is the true human touches—the vivid gleams of the unsophisticated human heart—revealed in these twin poems that has made them such a power on the platform and so charming as fireside reading. Everybody knows the story, but it is so fascinating that we cannot deny ourselves the pleasure of going over it again. The characters are a farmer and his wife. The story is told by the husband to a lawyer, at whose office he has called to get a deed of separation drawn up, things at home being crossways.

BETSY AND I ARE OUT.

Draw up the papers, lawyer, and make 'em good and stout;
For things at home are crossways, and Betsy and I are out,
We, who have worked together so long as man and wife,
Must pull in single harness for the rest of our nat'ral life.

"What is the matter?" say you. I swan it's hard to tell!
Most of the years behind us we've pass'd by very well!
I have no other woman, she has no other man—
Only we've lived together as long as we ever can.

So I have talk'd with Betsy, and Betsy has talk'd with me,
And so we've agreed together that we can never agree;
Not that we've catch'd each other in any terrible crime;
We've been a-gathering this for years, a little at a time.

There was a stock of temper we both had for a start,
Although we never suspected 'twould take us two apart;
I had my various failings, bred in the flesh and bone,
And Betsy, like all good women, had a temper of her own.

The first thing, I remember, wherein we disagreed,
Was something concerning heaven—a difference in our creed;
We argued the thing at breakfast, we argued the thing at tea,
And the more we argued the question, the more we didn't agree.

And the next that I remember, was when we lost a cow;
She had kick'd the bucket for certain, the question was only—
How?
I held my own opinion, and Betsy another had;
And when we were done a-talking, we both of us was mad.

And the next that I remember, it started in a joke;
And full for a week it lasted, and neither of us spoke;
And the next was when I scolded, because she broke a bowl;
And she said I was mean and stingy, and hadn't any soul.

And so that bowl kept pouring dissensions in our cup;
And so that blamed cow-creature was always a-comin' up;
And so that heaven we argued no nearer to us got,
But it gave us a taste of something a thousand times as hot.

And so the thing kept workin', and all the self-same way;
Always something to argue, and something sharp to say;
And down on us come the neighbours, a couple dozen strong,
And lent their kindest service for to help the thing along.

And there has been days together—and many a weary week—
We was both of us cross and spunky, and both too proud to speak;
And I have been thinkin', and thinkin', the whole of the winter and fall.
If I can't live kind with a woman, why then, I won't at all.

And so I have talked with Betsy, and Betsy has talked with me,
And we have agreed together that we can never agree;
And what is hers shall be hers, and what is mine shall be mine,
And I'll put it in the agreement and take it to her to sign.

Write on the paper, lawyer—the very first paragraph,
Of all the farm and live stock that she shall have her half ;
For she has help'd to earn it through many a weary day,
And it's nothing more than justice that Betsy has her pay.

Give her the house and homestead—a man can thrive and roam ;
But women are skeery critters unless they have a home ;
And I have always determined, and never failed to say,
That Betsy should never want a home if I was taken away.

There's a little hard money that's drawin' tol'rable pay—
A couple of hundred dollars laid by for a rainy day—
Safe in the hands of good men, and easy to get at ;
Put in another clause there, and give her half of that.

Yes, I see you smile, sir, at my givin' her so much—
Yes, divorce is cheap, sir, but I take no stock in such !
True and fair I married her when she was blythe and young,
And Betsy was always good to me, exceptin' with her tongue.

Once, when I was young as you, and not so smart, perhaps,
For me she mittened a lawyer and several other chaps,
And all of them was flustered, and fairly taken down,
And I for a time was counted the luckiest man in town.

Once, when I had a fever—I wont forget it soon—
I was hot as a basted turkey, and crazy as a loon,
Never an hour went by me when she was out of sight—
She nursed me true and tender, and stuck to me day and night.

And if ever a house was tidy, and ever a kitchen clean,
Her house and kitchen was tidy as any I ever seen ;
And I don't complain of Betsy, or any of her acts,
Excepting when we've quarrelled, and told each other facts.

So draw up the paper, lawyer, and I'll go home to-night,
And read the agreement to her, and see if it's all right ;
And then, in the mornin', I'll sell to a trading man I know,
And kiss the child that was left to us, and out in the world I'll go.

And one thing put in the paper that first to me didn't occur,
That when I am dead at last she'll bring me back to her,
And lay me under the maples I planted years ago,
When she and I were happy, before we quarrelled so.

And when she dies I wish that she would be laid by me,
And lyin' together in silence, perhaps we will agree ;
And, if ever we meet in heaven, I wouldn't think it queer
If we loved each other the better, because we quarrelled here.

HOW BETSY AND I MADE UP.

Give us your hand, Mr. Lawyer ; how do you do to-day?
You drew up that paper—I suppose you want your pay ;
Don't cut down your figures—make it an X. or a V.,
For that 'ere written agreement was just the makin' of me.

Goin' home that evenin' I tell you I was blue,
Thinkin' of all my troubles, and what I was goin' to do ;
And if my horses hadn't been the steadiest team alive
They'd 've tipped me over, certain, fer I couldn't see where to drive.

No—for I was labourin' under a heavy load ;
No—for I was travellin' an entirely different road ;
For I was tracin' over the paths of our lives ag'in,
And seein' where we miss'd the way, and where we might have been.

And many a corner we'd turned that just to a quarrel led,
When I ought to have held my temper, and driven straight ahead ;
And the more I thought it over the more these memories came,
And the more I struck the opinion that I was the most to blame.

And things I had long forgotten kept risin' in my mind,
Of little matters betwixt us where Betsy was good and kind ;
And these things flashed all through me, as you know things sometimes will
When a feller's alone in the darkness and everything is still.

"But," says I, "we're too far along to take another track,
And when I put my hand to the plough I do not oft turn back;
And 'taint no uncommon thing now for couples to smash in two,"
And so I set my teeth together and vow'd I'd see it through.

When I come in sight o' the house 'twas some'at in the night,
And just as I turned a hill-top I see the kitchen light;
Which often a han'some pictur' to a hungry person makes,
But it don't interest a fellow much that's going to pull up stakes.

And when I went in the house, the table was set for me—
As good a supper's I ever saw, or ever want to see;
And I crammed the agreement down my pocket as well as I could,
And fell to eatin' my victuals, which somehow didn't taste good.

And Betsy she pretended to look about the house,
But she watched my side coat pocket like a cat would watch a mouse;
And then she went to foolin' a little with her cup,
And intently readin' a newspaper, a-holding it wrong side up.

And when I'd done my supper I drawed the agreement out,
And gave it to her without a word, for she know'd what 'twas about;
And then I humm'd a little tune, but now and then a note
Was busted by some animal that hopp'd up in my throat.

Then Betsy she got her specs from off the mantel-shelf,
And read the article over quite softly to herself;
Read it little by little, for her eyes is getting old,
And lawyer's writin' ain't no print, especially when it's cold.

And after she'd read a little, she gave my arm a touch
And kindly said she was afraid I was 'lowin' her too much;
And when she was through she went for me, her face a-streamin' with tears,
And kissed me for the first time in over twenty years.

I don't know what you'll think, sir—I did'nt come to enquire—
But I pick'd up that agreement and stuff'd it in the fire,

And I told her we'd bury the hatchet alongside of the cow,
And we struck an agreement never to have another row.

And I told her in the future I wouldn't speak cross or rash,
If half the crockery in the house was broken all to smash;
And she said in regards to heaven, we'd try and learn its worth;
By startin' a branch establishment and runnin' it here on earth.

And so we sat a-talkin' three-quarters of the night,
And opened our hearts to each other until they both grew light,
And the days when I was winnin' her away from so many men,
Was nothing to that evenin' I courted her over again.

Next mornin' an ancient virgin took pains to call on us,
Her lamp all trimmed and a-burnin' to kindle another fuss;
But when she went to pryin' and openin' of old sores,
My Betsy rose politely and showed her out of doors.

Since then I don't deny but there's been a word or two;
But we've got our eyes wide open and know just what to do;
When one speaks cross the other just meets it with a laugh,
And the first one's ready to give up considerable more than half.

Maybe you'll think me soft, sir, a-talking in this style,
But somehow it does me lots of good to tell it once in a while;
And I do it for a compliment—'tis so that you may see,
That that there written agreement of yours was just the makin'
of me.

So make out your bill, Mr. Lawyer; don't stop short of an X;
Make it more if you want to, for I have got the checks,
I'm richer than a National Bank, with all its treasure told,
For I've got a wife at home now that's worth her weight in gold.

The whole piece is cast in the richest vein of natural humour; but it is more than a humorous poem—it is a lay sermon, and one that cannot be too often preached, as it has lessons that apply to every married couple. "Over the Hill to the Poorhouse," and its sequel, "Over the Hill from the Poorhouse," are twin poems of

similar character and grit. An old woman of seventy is cast on the "tender mercies" of a cold-blooded family of sons and daughters, all of whom are married and in homes of their own—some of them in comfortable enough circumstances; but all of them too selfish and greedy, or too proud, to have their plain old mother at their fireside. So "over the hill to the poorhouse" she trudges her weary way.

"Over the hill to the poorhouse—my children, dear, good-bye!
Many a night I've watched you when only God was nigh.
And God'll judge between us; but I will always pray
That you shall never suffer the half I do to-day."

The sequel in this case is related by the scapegrace of the family, who,

"Splintered all over with dodges and tricks,"

was

"Known as 'the worst of the Deacon's six.'"

In relating some of his early misdeeds, he is frank enough to admit—

"And when, one dark and rainy night,
A neighbour's horse went out of sight,
They hitched on me as the guilty chap
That carried one end of the halter-strap;
And I think, myself, that view of the case
Wasn't altogether out o' place."

For the credit of the family he had had to quit the district and go "out West," from whence, for the comfort of his "stuck-up" brothers and sisters, he sent back the intelligence that he was dead—and died a Christian. When, however, the friend with whom he corresponded, wrote and told him that his mother was in the poorhouse, he "had a resurrection straightway," and started for home that very day.

"And when I arrived where I was grown
I took good care I shouldn't be known;
But I bought the old cottage, through and through,
Of some one Charley had sold it to,
And held back neither work nor gold,
To fix it up as it was of old."

Then—

"One blowin', blusterin' winter's day,
With a team and cutter I started away;
My fiery nags was as black as coal
(The same 'at resembled the horse I stole);
I hitched, and entered the poorhouse door—
A poor old woman was scrubbin' the floor.

. . . . .

'Mother,' I shouted, 'your sorrows is done!
You're adopted along o' your horse-thief son,
Come over the hill from the poorhouse!'"

There is real skill in the management of this poem, of which we have given only the barest outline, and it is enlivened from first to last with rare natural touches, the one strong feature which it reveals of the "bad stick" of the family being the kindest-hearted among them, proving, perhaps, the truest touch of all.

Farm Ballads, which contains both of these poems, was originally published, with illustrations, in 1873, and met with an enormous sale, since which it has gone into edition after edition, both in America and in Britain. In 1875 it was followed by *Farm Legends*, which, though it contains fewer pieces that have "caught on," is a hardly less successful book of ballad ware. A year later appeared *Young Folks' Centennial Rhymes*, a book of little interest to readers on this side of the Atlantic. Then came several years of hard work on the lecture platform, and not till 1881 did the third of the farm series, *Farm Festivals*, appear. *City Ballads*

came out in 1885, and *City Legends* in 1889; and these, so far as I know, form the sum of Mr. Carleton's published works. In *Farm Festivals* will be found "The First Settler's Story," perhaps the most ambitious of all his poems. Following it is "Eliphalet Chapin's Wedding," a rich and broadly-humorous effect. Eliphalet sets out with an ancient two-ox waggon to bring home his bride, and the story goes :—

"He had not carried five miles his mouth-disputed face,
When his wedding garments parted in some inconvenient place;
He'd have given both his oxen to a wife that now was dead,
For her company two minutes with a needle and a thread,
But he pinned them up with twinges of occasional distress,
Feeling that his wedding wouldn't be a carnival of dress."

Other disasters befell the luckless bridegroom in his journey, which the reader will find detailed in the poem itself, where he will also learn that when he arrived his appearance was so disappointing that his bride-elect repelled him, and soothed her wounded feelings by sloping the next morning with "a swarthy Indian 'buck.'"

In my next example of Mr. Carleton's humour—that which forms the greater portion of "The Doctor's Story" in *Farm Legends*—readers will find a prescription for health worth bearing in mind and practising when occasion demands :—

Deacon Rogers he came to me;
"Wife is agoin' to die," said he,
"Doctors great, and doctors small,
Haven't improved her any at all.
Physic and blister, powders and pills,
And nothing sure but the doctors' bills!
Twenty women, with remedies new,
Bother my wife the whole day through.
Sweet as honey, as bitter as gall—
Poor old woman, she takes 'em all.

Sour or sweet, whatever they choose ;
Poor old woman, she daren't refuse.
So she pleases whoever may call,
And Death is suited the best of all.
Physic and blister, powder and pill—
Bound to conquer and sure to kill.

Mrs. Rogers lay in her bed,
Bandaged and blistered from foot to head.
Blistered and bandaged from head to toe,
Mrs. Rogers was very low.
Bottle and saucer, spoon and cup,
On the table stood bravely up ;
Physic of high and low degree ;
Calomel, catnip, boneset tea ;
Everything a body could bear,
Excepting light and water and air.

I opened the blinds ; the day was bright,
And God gave Mrs. Rogers some light.
I opened the window ; the day was fair,
And God gave Mrs. Rogers some air.
Bottles and blisters, powders and pills,
Catnip, boneset, syrups and squills ;
Drugs and medicines, high and low,
I threw them as far as I could throw.
"What are you doing?" my patient cried :
"Frightening Death," I coolly replied.
"You are crazy!" a visitor said ;
I flung a bottle at his head.

Deacon Rogers he came to me ;
"Wife is a-getting her health," said he.
"I really think she will worry through ;
She scolds me just as she used to do.
All the people have poohed and slurred—
All the neighbours have had their word ;
'Twere better to perish, some of 'em say,
Than be cured in such an irregular way."

"Your wife," said I, "had God's good care,
And His remedies, light, and water, and air.
All of the doctors beyond a doubt,
Couldn't have cured Mrs. Rogers without."

The Deacon smiled and bowed his head;
"Then your bill is nothing," he said;
"God's be the glory, as you say!
God bless you, doctor! Good-day! Good-day!"

If ever I doctor that woman again,
I'll give her medicines made by men.

There you have wisdom and humour—the wit and the moralist—going merrily hand in hand, as they have frequently appeared in these pages. Indeed, your true humourist, as I have contended heretofore, and will again, is always half moralist—the philosopher who walks on the sunny side of the road, and in whose company there is life and joy and health and safety. The man is he—the true humourist—who mends every error he can, and laughs at the unmendable—who sugar-coats all the moral medicine in the world—shows us the folly of weeping over spilt milk—and how funny a thing it is to get a bad tooth pulled—who says, why grow lean with weeping when you may as easily laugh and grow fat? why pine and die in the shadow of gloom when there is life and joy in the sunshine of happiness? Come with me and I will make you glad! His voice is the voice of a charmer, who would charm you but to make you happier. Go with him, then, and stay with him as long as he is able to keep you. While your heart is filled with laughter there will be no room in it for treason, and it is time enough to be gloomy when you are no longer able to be happy. Laughter must be sought for, grief will come unbidden. All

praise, then, to those authors who have done so much to make the world happier. By making it happier they have made it better. Will Carleton's share in the good work has been immense, and he has the unspoken gratitude of millions of his fellow creatures for the sunshine he has shed on the devious and sometimes tortured paths of their lives.

For the full flavour of the rich *naiveté* that percolates through "Tom was goin' for a Poet," "The Editor's Guests," "Gone with a Handsomer Man," "Our Travelled Parson," and "The New Church Organ," etc., none of which yield themselves agreeably to a process of sampling, the poems must be perused line by line from first to last. We shall have only one more whole slice of Carleton's quality here, and the following in preference, because it is less widely known than those just named, not being included in any of the collections of his poems yet published on this side :—

ELDER LAMB'S DONATION.

Good old Elder Lamb had labored for a thousand nights and days,
And had preached the blessed Bible in a multitude of ways ;
Had received a message daily over Faith's celestial wire,
And had kept his little chapel full of flames of heavenly fire ;
He had raised a num'rous family, straight and sturdy as he could,
And his boys were all considered as unnaturally good ;
And his "slender sal'ry" kept him till went forth the proclamation—
"We will pay him up this season with a gen'rous large donation."

So they brought him hay and barley, and some corn upon the ear—
Straw enough to bed his pony forever and a year ;
And they strewed him with potatoes of inconsequential size,
And some onions whose completeness drew the moisture from his eyes ;

And some cider—more like water, in an inventory strict—
And some apples, pears, and peaches, that the autumn gales had picked;
And some strings of dried-up apples—mummies of the fruit creation—
Came to swell the doleful census of old Elder Lamb's donation.

Also radishes and turnips pressed the pumpkin's cheerful cheek,
Likewise beans enough to furnish half of Boston for a week;
And some butter that was worthy to have Samson for a foe,
And some eggs whose inner-nature held the legend—"Long Ago;"
And some stove-wood, green and crooked, on his flower-beds was laid,
Fit to furnish fire departments with the most substantial aid.
All things unappreciated found this night their true vocation
In the museum of relics, known as Elder Lamb's donation.

There were biscuits whose material was their own secure defence;
There were sauces whose acuteness bore the sad pluperfect tense;
There were jellies undissected, there were mystery-laden pies;
There was bread that long had waited for the signal to arise.
There were cookies tasting clearly of the drear and musty past;
There were doughnuts that in justice 'mongst the metals might be classed;
There were chickens, geese and turkeys that had long been on probation,
Now received in full connection at old Elder Lamb's donation.

Then they gave his wife a wrapper made for some one not so tall,
And they brought him twenty slippers, every pair of which was small;
And they covered him with sack-cloth, as it were, in various bits,
And they clothed his helpless children in a wardrobe of misfits;
And they trimmed his house with "Welcome," and some bric-à bracish trash,
And one absent-minded brother brought five dollars all in cash!
Which the good old pastor handled with a thrill of exultation,
Wishing that in filthy lucre might have come his whole donation.

Morning came at last, in splendor; but the elder, wrapped in gloom,
Knelt amid decaying produce and the ruins of his home;
And his piety had never till that morning been so bright,
For he prayed for those who brought him to that unexpected plight.
But some worldly thoughts intruded; for he wondered o'er and o'er
If they'd buy that day at auction, what they gave the night before;
And his fervent prayer concluded with the natural exclamation:
"Take me to Thyself in mercy, Lord, before my next donation!"

"THE DANBURY NEWSMAN."

THOSE of my readers who cut their wisdom tooth more than twenty years ago, will remember that about that time no American newspaper was more frequently quoted by the journals of this country than the *Danbury News*. Its racy, humorous, and fantastic paragraphs were reproduced in all the weekly publications here: and thousands of men and women who had never heard of Danbury as a flourishing town in Connecticut, with a fame for the manufacture of hats, came to know it familiarly by headmark as the home of Mr. J. M. Bailey, "The Danbury Newsman." Until 1874, it is true, we had known Mr. Bailey only as "The Danbury Newsman." But in the summer of that year he made the "tour of Europe," and writing for his paper, as he did, his impressions of the various places and people that he was fortunate enough to see in the course of his brief sojourn, these rapidly returned here, and his name breaking out, soon became very well known.

Mr. Bailey, if he did not actually originate what is known as the American style of news paragraph, has perhaps done more than any other writer to popularise it. It certainly was not usual before his day to find the ordinary events of everyday life dished up in the fantastic and attractive manner which the columns of his paper have been wont to reveal. But a word or two about the man first, and we will look at his work afterwards.

Mr. James Montgomery Bailey was born at Albany on the 5th of September in the year 1841. When he was only two years old his father was killed, and three years subsequently his mother married a Mr. Smith, of Rome, N.Y., and moved there with her son, then five years old. His maternal grandfather resided in Albany, and the boyhood of Mr. Bailey was consequently spent partly in Rome and partly in Albany, and he attended school in both places. After a brief experience of work in a grocery store, and latterly as a clerk in a law office, he moved with his family in 1860 to Danbury, and began life in earnest as an apprentice carpenter, although even at this early time his newspaper instincts had begun to manifest themselves in letters to the local press, etc. He had not been a spoiler of wood more than a couple of years when the great Civil War broke out, and he enlisted in the Danbury Company of the 17th Connecticut Volunteers.

Where he received his "baptism of fire" has not been recorded, but he was captured at the Battle of Gettysburg, and was made a prisoner of war and detained for a short time at Belle Isle. Immediately on regaining his freedom he rejoined his regiment at Charleston, N.Y., and resumed fighting. In this regiment was a young man who had been a printer's

apprentice, and Mr. Bailey formed an intimate acquaintance with him. And when at the close of the war he returned to Danbury, he brought his associate with him. This gentleman was Mr. Timothy Donovan. The two had enterprise, but just then were experiencing the great scarcity of the sinews of war in the shape of financial assets. They secured the co-operation of their friends, however, and purchased the *Danbury Times*, a broken-down news-sheet with scarcely enough circulation to keep the boys in shoe leather. This purchase was made in September, 1865, and the new proprietors first conducted it as a Democratic paper.

Now, there was another paper published at Danbury at the same time called the *Jeffersonian*, which had strong Republican proclivities, and like its neighbour had no very luxurious existence. So, Mr. Bailey, who has loved fun and success rather than politics, made an arrangement for the consolidation of the two papers, and changed the name to the *Danbury News*. This was in March 1870. The year previous the little squibs which emanated from our subject's pen had begun to attract the notice of newspaper men; and were occasionally copied. After the inauguration of the *News*, the copying process became much more general, and the name of the paper was carried far and wide, while at the same time its circulation rapidly increased.

He had never, it appears, made any special effort to be funny; but at odd hours, and particularly during evenings at home, the brilliant scintillations of his work were jotted down just as they occurred to his mind, and appeared from time to time in the paper. When, however, he discovered by-and-bye that he held a mine all his own in this way, he set himself to work it with assiduous care and regularity, the result being that his

pen-name became suddenly famous throughout the whole American continent, and the general inquiry was —"Who is this man?" *Rowell's Newspaper Reporter*, in 1870, answered the question by printing a sketch of his career.

In 1873 Mr. Bailey took a trip to California, and while absent wrote articles for the *News*, headed with the letters, "T. B. T. G. G." This title was the subject of much curious comment, until it was explained that it was formed by the initial characters of "Tight Boots Through Golden Gates."

In 1874, as I have already said, he made the "tour of Europe," visiting successively England, Scotland, Ireland, France, and other countries. A year before this his first and best-known book, *Life in Danbury*, had appeared, and before leaving to come this way the finishing touches had been given to *The Danbury Newsman's Almanac*. His trip to this country was to furnish the material for a third volume, and he set to work and made copy *en route*. The book is happily enough titled, *England from a Back Window*. Certainly his brief sojourn did not afford time for an all-round view, and the description is consequently partial. Such glimpses as he got from the back window even were not always reflected correctly on his pages, but as they appeared on the retina of his humorous eye.

Thus, when speaking of the drinking habits of England, he says—"Every family has its ale; so does every workman; and in every branch of business it is part of the contract that the labourer shall have his pint of ale daily. It is served in the hospitals and to the charity children. It is given to visitors, and helps forward Church conventions. To the English it is like water. Water? Why—But I will let it go. It is one of the

best jokes I ever heard. When water becomes as common in England as is ale, the finest drainage ever invented will not save the country."

If the view is contorted, however, the picture is happy enough, and has sufficient truth in it to save it from utter condemnation. His observations and reflections in front of Buckingham Palace are typical of the true Yankee humourist. Artemus Ward, with all his power of whimsical humour, could not have beat this: "The most attractive object to me about the exterior of this four-storey slate-roof palace," he says, "is the coat-of-arms over the gateway. It is the English coat-of-arms—a lion and a unicorn on their hind-legs, squaring off at each other. I can't tell the number of hours I have remained planted in front of that gateway admiring those figures; and for nearly an hour this Sunday afternoon I stood leaning against the St. James fence in a trance of delight. The lion has a smile on its face. It is the first lion I ever saw laugh. I have seen thousands of these coat-of-arms, but never saw a sedate lion: he is always laughing, as if it were the funniest joke he ever heard of—being matched against a unicorn with a barber-pole between his eyes. And it is absurd when you come to think of it, for a lion could whip a unicorn around a stump, and have his barber-pole in front of a milliner shop inside of nine seconds. But I like to see a lion look pleased. I think we were all intended to be happy. A lion that won't laugh is no society for me. As for a unicorn, I am not much that way. I enter heartily into the life sentiment of a lamented friend who, years ago, went to a better home, which was, 'Gol darn a unicorn anyway!'"

On reaching Edinburgh, Mr. Bailey makes the usual

rush around to view the objects of interest, but fixes things to suit his own notion. He says :—

"Back of the Church of St. Giles are the former Parliament Buildings, and between the two is a paved square. You would hardly believe it, but John Knox is buried here. Near the centre of the square is a reddish block of stone set in the pavement, and on its face, in brass, are two letters—J.K. Carriage-wheels go over it, the foot of every pedestrian treads on it—the grave of John Knox. But it is a joke, dear reader—an Edinburgh joke. This square stone sunk to a line with the pavement is not John Knox's tomb. His tomb is on Princes Street—a structure worthy of the greatness of the man. But the facetious Edinburghers say that this is John Knox's sepulchre, and that the magnificent monument in the Princes Street Park is erected to the memory of a party named Scott, a concocter of amusing fiction. Did you ever hear anything like that? Now, if they had assigned this beautiful memorial to Duncan Forbes, or even George the Fourth, the joke would have taken well; but in the present instance the absurdity is so great that it defeats its purpose. But the Scottish people don't care. They are so set in their principles, and so jealous of the reputation of their great Reformer, and so appreciative of the results of his struggle, that they think they can joke as absurdly as possible without danger of being misrepresented. It was a cunning idea to make the J. K. over this water or gas main (for one or the other it undoubtedly is) in the old English style, I.K. It is a wink in stone, being the initials of 'I know.'"

His next hit is at Glasgow—and a palpable hit, too. "We reached Glasgow," he says, "at 4 P.M., but commenced to smell it at a quarter past three. Glasgow

thinks it wants a new harbour; but what it really needs is some chloride of lime." If he went to Glasgow to scoff, however, he remained to praise it as "a handsome city, in point of architectural merit superior to Edinburgh."

One of the charms of this record of travel is that while the writer is seldom more than half in earnest, he is frequently not more than half in jest. We have our national weaknesses. There are blots on our escutcheon, and on these he lightly banters us—these he laughs at. But our sterling personal qualities, our national physique, our mountain scenery, the Trossachs—in viewing which he forgets he has a cigar in his hand—these command his admiration, and receive unstinted praise. But we must pass on to other matters.

Succeeding *England from a Back Window*, Mr. Bailey, within the next four years, published *Mr. Phillips' Governess*, *The Danbury Boom*, and other books. In the fall of 1876 he started out as a lecturer under the management of the Redpath Lyceum Bureau, and on the "stump" was successful alike as at the desk. In 1878 he dissolved with Mr. Donovan; and the profits which he has derived from the successful issue of a daily and weekly newspaper have placed him in a position of supreme comfort.

For the last seven or eight years he has been retired from active editorial work, and lives in a handsome villa with his amiable wife and family in Danbury; a town which has been kind to him, and which by way of compensation he has done much to make famous. Mr. Bailey, it may further be remarked, is a Knight Templar and Shriner in the Masonic fraternity, and is a consistent member of the Baptist Church, and teaches a Sunday School class of about twenty young ladies.

He is president of the Danbury Board of Trade, a director of various public and charitable organisations, and, altogether, a forward, model, and highly respected townsman.

Success, however, while it has evidently made the man and the good citizen, has apparently killed the humourist. The fantastic paragraphs that made the *Danbury News* famous, and the "screeds" of racy humour that made his books popular, have ceased to issue from his pen. The man lives and thrives; but the humourist, if not defunct, has ceased to give out from the store of his unique fancy, and his admirers, who live to laugh and laugh to live, have been the sufferers.

As samples of the fantastic paragraphs to which I have referred, here are a few from a number I have kept beside me for many years:—

"A young man who went West from Danbury a few months ago has sent only one letter home. It came on Friday. It said, 'Send me a wig.' And his fond parents don't know whether he is scalped or married."

"Kate Stanton, in her lecture on 'The Loves of Great Men,' asserts that the planets revolve around the sun by the influence of love, like a child revolves about its parent. When the writer was a boy he used to revolve around his parent a good deal, and may have been incited thereto by love, but to an unprejudiced observer it looked powerfully like a trunk strap."

"Had Eve heard any of the peddlers on the New Haven road holler 'Apples,' there would have been no clothing stores in Danbury to-day."

Again,—and now making brief extracts from some of his books which are published in this country:—

"If you have occasion to use a wheelbarrow," he says,

"leave it, when you are through with it, in front of the house with the handles toward the door. A wheelbarrow is the most complicated thing to fall over on the face of the earth. A man will fall over one when he would never think of falling over anything else. He never knows when he has got through falling over it, either; for it will tangle his legs and his arms, turn over with him and rear up in front of him, and just as he pauses in his profanity to congratulate himself, it takes a new turn, and scoops more skin off of him, and he commences to evolute anew, and bump himself on fresh places. A man never ceases to fall over a wheelbarrow until it turns completely on its back, or brings up against something it cannot upset. It is the most inoffensive-looking object there is, but it is more dangerous than a locomotive, and no man is secure with one unless he has a tight hold of its handles, and is sitting down on something. A wheelbarrow has its uses, without doubt, but in its leisure moments it is the great blighting curse on true dignity."

Then, any one who has had a similar experience—and very many have—will enjoy his description of "Driving a Hen." He says:—

"When a woman has a hen to drive into a coop, she takes hold of her hoops with both hands, and shakes them quietly toward the delinquent, and says, 'Shew, there?' The hen takes one look at the object, to convince herself that it's a woman, and then stalks majestically into the coop, in perfect disgust of the sex. A man don't do it that way. He goes out of doors and says, 'It is singular nobody in this house can drive a hen but myself.' And, picking up a stick of wood, hurls it at the offending biped, and observes, 'Get in there, you thief.' The hen immediately loses her reason,

and dashes to the opposite end of the yard. The man straightway dashes after her. She comes back again with her head down, her wings out, and followed by an assortment of stove-wood, fruit-cans, and coal-clinkers, with a much-puffing and very mad man in the rear. Then she skims up on the stoop, and under the barn, and over a fence or two, and around the house, and back again to the coop, all the while talking as only an excited hen can talk, and all the while followed by things convenient for handling, and by a man whose coat is on the sawbuck, and whose hat is on the ground, and whose perspiration and profanity appear to have no limit. By this time the other hens have come out to take a hand in the debate, and help to dodge the missiles—and then the man says every hen on the place shall be sold in the morning, and puts on his things and goes down the street, and the woman dons her hoops, and has every one of those hens housed and contented in two minutes; and the only sound heard on the premises is the hammering by the eldest boy as he mends the broken pickets."

The above will be most enjoyed by male readers of these sketches. But if I have a lady reader who possesses the rare faculty of being able to "speak a piece" well in public—and I hope I have many—I would recommend to her for early use the following delicious example of Mr. Bailey's humour, which is all about

A BUTTON OFF.

"It is bad enough to see a bachelor sew on a button, but he is the embodiment of grace alongside of a married man. Necessity compelled experience in the case of the former, but the latter has always depended upon someone else for this service, and fortunately for

the sake of society, it is rarely he is obliged to resort to the needle himself. Sometimes the patient wife scalds her right hand or runs a sliver under the nail of the index finger of that hand, and it is then the man clutches the needle around the neck, and forgetting to tie a knot in the thread commences to put on the button. It is always in the morning, and from five to twenty minutes after he is expected to be down street. He lays the button exactly on the site of its predecessor, and pushes the needle through one eye, and carefully draws the thread after, leaving about three inches of it sticking up for leeway. He says to himself, 'Well, if women don't have the easiest time I ever see.'

"Then he comes back the other way, and gets the needle through the cloth well enough, and lays himself out to find the eye, but in spite of a great deal of patient jabbing, the needle point persists in bucking against the solid parts of that button, and finally, when he loses patience, his finger catches the thread, and that three inches he had left to hold the button slips through the eye in a twinkling, and the button rolls leisurely across the floor. He picks it up without a single remark, out of respect to his children, and makes another attempt to fasten it.

"This time when coming back with the needle he keeps both the thread and button from slipping by covering them with his thumb, and it is out of regard for that part of him that he feels around for the eye in a very careful and judicious manner; but eventually losing his philosophy as the search becomes more and more hopeless, he falls to jabbing about in a loose and savage manner, and it is just then the needle finds the opening, and comes up through the button and part way through his thumb with a celerity that no human

ingenuity can guard against. Then he lays down the things with a few familiar quotations, and presses the injured hand between his knees, and then holds it under the other arm, and finally jams it into his mouth, and all the while he prances about the floor and calls upon heaven and earth to witness that there has never been anything like it since the world was created, and howls, and whistles, and moans, and sobs. After a while he calms down, and puts on his pants, and fastens them together with a stick, and goes to business a changed man."

That should command an encore. It will be strange indeed if the married men and the ladies together do not insist on it. Very good!

Let the next selection be

A TEMPEST IN A TUB,

which is equally appetizing, but with the butter on the other side of the bread.

Mrs. Villiers had loaned Mrs. Ransom her wash-tub. This was two weeks ago last Monday. When Mrs. Villiers saw it again, which was the next morning, it stood on her back-stoop, minus a hoop. Mrs. Villiers sent over to Mrs. Ransom's a request for that hoop, couched in language calculated to impugn Mrs. Ransom's reputation for carefulness. Mrs. Ransom lost no time in sending back word that the tub was all right when it was sent back; and delicately intimated that Mrs. Villiers had better sweep before her own door first, whatever that might mean. Each having discharged a Christian duty to each other, further communication was immediately cut off; and the affair was briskly discussed by the neighbours, who entered into the merits and demerits of the affair with unselfish zeal. Heaven

bless them! Mrs. Ransom clearly explained her connection with the tub by charging Mrs. Villiers with coming home drunk as a fiddler the night before Christmas. This bold statement threatened to carry the neighbours over in a body to Mrs. Ransom's view; until Mrs. Villiers remembered, and promptly chronicled the fact, that the Ransoms were obliged to move away from their last place because of non-payment of rent. Here the matter rested among the neighbours, leaving them as undecided as before. But between the two families immediately concerned the fires burned as luridly as when first kindled. It was a constant skirmish between the two women from early morn until late at night. Mrs. Ransom would glare through her blind when Mrs. Villiers was in the yard, and murmur between her clinched teeth—

"Oh, you hussy!"

And, with that wondrous instinct which characterizes the human above the brute animal, Mrs. Villiers understood that Mrs. Ransom was thus engaged, and, lifting her nose at the highest angle compatible with the safety of her spinal cord, would sail around the yard as triumphantly as if escorted by a brigade of genuine princes.

And then would come Mrs. Villiers's turn at the window with Mrs. Ransom in the yard, with a like satisfactory and edifying result.

When company called on Mrs. Villiers, Mrs. Ransom would peer from behind her curtains, and audibly exclaim,—

"Whose that fright, I wonder?"

And, when Mrs. Ransom was favoured with a call, it was Mrs. Villiers's blessed privilege to be at the window, and audibly observe,—

"Where was that clod dug up from?"

Mrs. Ransom has a little boy named Tommy; and Mrs. Villiers has a similarly sized son who struggles under the cognomen of Wickliffe Morgan. It will happen, because these two children are too young to grasp fully the grave responsibilities of life,—it will happen, we repeat, that they will come together in various respects. If Mrs. Ransom is so fortunate as to first observe one of these cohesions, she promptly steps to the door, and, covertly waiting until Mrs. Villiers's door opens, she shrilly observes,—

"Thomas Jefferson, come right into this house this minit! How many times have I told you to keep away from that Villiers brat."

"*Villiers brat!*" What a stab that is! What subtle poison it is saturated with! Poor Mrs. Villiers's breath comes thick and hard; her face burns like fire; and her eyes almost snap out of her head. She has to press her hand to her heart as if to keep that organ from bursting. There is no relief from the dreadful throbbing and the dreadful pain. The slamming of Mrs. Ransom's door shuts out all hope of succour. But it quickens Mrs. Villiers's faculties, and makes her so alert, that when the two children come together again, which they very soon do, she is the first at the door. Now is the opportunity to heap burning coals on the head of Mrs. Ransom. She heaps them.

"Wickliffe Morgan! What are you doing out there with that Ransom imp? Do you want to catch some disease? Come in here before I skin you."

And the door slams shut; and poor Mrs. Ransom, with trembling form, and bated breath, and flashing eyes, clinches her fingers, and glares with tremendous wrath over the landscape.

And in the absence of any real, tangible information as to the loss of that hoop, this is, perhaps, the very best that can be done on either side.

Finally here—

MR. STIVER'S HORSE.

The other morning at breakfast, Mrs. Perkins observed that Mr. Stiver, in whose house we live, had been called away, and wanted to know if I would see to his horse through the day.

I knew that Mr. Stiver owned a horse, because I occasionally saw him drive out of the yard, and I saw the stable every day; but what kind of a horse I didn't know. I never went into the stable, for two reasons: in the first place, I had no desire to; and secondly, I didn't know as the horse cared particularly for company.

I never took care of a horse in my life, and had I been of a less hopeful nature, the charge Mr. Stivers had left with me might have had a very depressing effect; but I told Mrs. Perkins I would do it.

"You know how to take care of a horse, don't you?" said she.

I gave her a reassuring wink. In fact, I knew so little about it that I didn't think it safe to converse more fluently than by winks.

After breakfast I seized a toothpick, and walked out towards the stable. There was nothing particular to do, as Stiver had given him his breakfast, and I found him eating it; so I looked around. The horse looked around too, and stared pretty hard at me. There was but little said on either side. I hunted up the location of the feed, and then sat down on a peck measure, and fell to studying the beast. There is a wide difference in horses.

Some of them will kick you over, and never look round to see what becomes of you. I don't like a disposition like that, and I wondered if Stiver's horse was one of them.

When I came home at noon I went straight to the stable. The animal was there all right. Stiver hadn't told me what to give him for dinner, and I had not given the subject any thought; but I went to the oat box, and filled the peck measure, and sallied up to the manger.

When he saw the oats he almost smiled; this pleased and amused him. I emptied them into the trough, and left him above me to admire the way I parted my hair behind. I just got my head up in time to save the whole of it.

He had his ears back, his mouth open, and looked as if he were on the point of committing murder. I went out and filled the measure again, and climbed up the side of the stall, and emptied it on top of him. He brought his head up so suddenly at this, that I immediately got down, letting go of everything to do it. I struck on the sharp edge of a barrel, rolled over a couple of times, and then disappeared under a hay-cutter. The peck measure went down on the other side, and got mysteriously tangled up in that animal's heels, and he went to work at it; and then ensued the most dreadful noise I ever heard in my life, and I have been married eighteen years.

It did seem as if I never would get out from under that hay-cutter; and all the while I was struggling and wrenching myself and the cutter apart, that awful beast was kicking around in that stall, and making the most appalling sound imaginable.

When I got out I found Mrs. Perkins at the door.

She had heard the racket, and had sped out to the stable, her only thought being of me and three stove lids which she had under her arm, and one of which she was about to fire at the beast.

This made me mad.

"Go away, you unfortunate idiot," I shouted. "Do you want to knock my brains out?" For I remembered seeing Mrs. Perkins sling a missile once before, and that I nearly lost an eye by the operation, although standing on the other side of the house at the time.

She retired at once. And at the same time the animal quieted down, but there was nothing left of that peck measure, not even the maker's name.

I followed Mrs. Perkins into the house, and had her do me up, and then I sat down in a chair, and fell into a profound strain of meditation. After a while I felt better, and went out to the stable again. The horse was leaning against the stable wall, with eyes half closed, and appeared to be very much engrossed in thought.

"Step off to the left," I said, rubbing his back. He didn't step. I got the pitchfork, and punched him in the leg with the handle.

He immediately raised up both legs at once, and that fork flew out of my hands, and went rattling up against the timbers above, and came down again in an instant, the end of the handle rapping me with such force on the top of the head that I sat right down on the floor, under the impression that I was standing in front of a drug store in the evening. I went back to the house and got some more stuff on me. But I couldn't keep away from that stable. I went out there again. The thought struck me that what the horse wanted was exercise. If that thought had been an empty glycerine can, it would have

saved a windfall of luck for me. But exercise would tone him down, and exercise him I would. I laughed to myself to think how I would trounce him around the yard. I didn't laugh again that afternoon. I got him unhitched, and then wondered how I was to get him out of the stall without carrying him out. I pushed, but he wouldn't budge. I stood looking at him in the face, thinking of something to say, when he suddenly solved the difficulty by veering about and plunging for the door. I followed, as a matter of course, because I had a tight hold on the rope, and hit about every partition stud worth speaking of on that side of the barn. Mrs. Perkins was at the window, and saw us come out of the door. She subsequently remarked that we came out skipping like two innocent children. The skipping was entirely unintentional for my part. I felt as if I stood on the verge of eternity. My legs may have skipped, but my mind was filled with awe.

I took that animal out to exercise him. He exercised me before I got through with it. He went around a few times in a circle; then he stopped suddenly, spread out his fore-legs, and looked at me. Then he leaned forward a little, and hoisted both hind-legs, and threw about two coal-hods of mud over a line full of clothes Mrs. Perkins had just hung out.

That excellent lady had taken a position at the window; and whenever the evolutions of the awful beast permitted, I caught a glance at her features. She appeared to be very much interested in the proceedings, but the instant that the mud flew, she disappeared from the window, and a moment later she appeared on the stoop with a long poker in her hand, and fire enough in her eye to heat it red-hot.

Just then Stiver's horse stood up on his hind legs,

and tried to hug me with the others. This scared me. A horse never shows his strength to such advantage as when he is coming down on you like a gigantic pile-driver. I instantly dodged, and the cold sweat fairly boiled out of me.

It suddenly came over me that I had once figured in a similar position years ago. My grandfather owned a little white horse that would get up from a meal at Delmonico's to kick the President of the United States. He sent me to the lot one day, and unhappily suggested that I often went after that horse, and suffered all kinds of defeat in getting him out of the pasture, but I had never tried to ride him. Heaven knows I never thought of it. I had my usual trouble with him that day. He tried to jump over me, and push me down in a mud hole, and finally got up on his hind legs, and came waltzing after me with facilities enough to convert me into a hash, but I turned and just made for that fence with all the agony a prospect of instant death could crowd into me. If our candidate for the Presidency had run one-half so well, there would be seventy-five postmasters in Danbury to-day, instead of one.

I got him out finally, and then he was quiet enough, and took him up alongside the fence and got on him. He stopped an instant, one brief instant, and then tore off down the road at a frightful speed. I laid down on him, and clasped my hands tightly around his neck, and thought of my home. When we got to the stable I was confident he would stop, but he didn't. He drove straight at the door. It was a low door, just high enough to permit him to go in at lightning speed, but there was no room for me. I saw if I struck that stable the struggle would be a very brief one. I thought this all over in an instant, and then, spreading out my arms

and legs, emitted a scream, and the next moment I was bounding about in the filth of that stable yard. All this passed through my mind as Stiver's horse went up in the air. It frightened Mrs. Perkins dreadfully.

"Why, you old fool!" she said, "why don't you get rid of him?"

"How can I?" said I, in desperation.

"Why there are a thousand ways," said she.

This is just like a woman. How different a statesman would have answered.

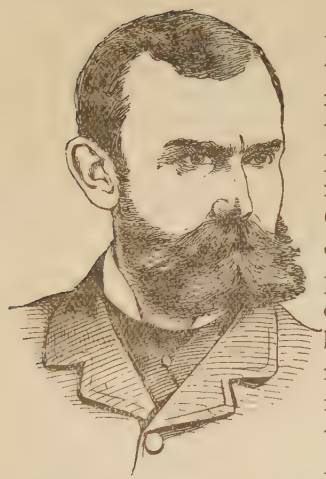
But I could think of only two ways to dispose of the beast. I could either swallow him where he stood and then sit down on him, or I could crawl inside of him and kick him to death.

But I was saved either of these expedients by his coming towards me so abruptly that I dropped the rope in terror, and then he turned about, and kicking me full of mud, shot for the gate, ripping the clothes line in two, and went on down the street at a horrible gallop, with two of Mrs. Perkins's garments, which he hastily snatched from the line, floating over his neck in a very picturesque manner.

So I was afterwards told. I was too full of mud myself to see the way into the house.

Stiver got his horse all right, and stays at home to take care of him. Mrs. Perkins has gone to her mother's to recuperate, and I am healing as fast as possible.

COLONEL JOHN HAY.



IF quantity were the sole or even the main criterion by which an author is to be judged, were it the rule to estimate a poet's worth by the lineal measurement of his verses, Colonel John Hay would occupy a very humble position amongst American men of letters, and his name, unless by the merest accident, would never have penetrated to this side of the Atlantic. *Pike County Ballads*, on which his reputation as a poet entirely depends, is a slim little volume of not much more than one hundred pages, of one half of which the world knows nothing, and cares just about as much. One song or ballad, however, as we have frequently seen, that is lit with a spark of Nature's fire—one little poem, if it contains the magic touch of Nature which makes the whole world kin—is a sufficient basis on which to build a reputation that will remain as enduring as the sun and the stars.

Colonel Hay's fame as a poet and author in this country, if not also in his native land, is due to half a

dozen Pike County Ballads, including "Jim Bludso," "Little Breeches," "Banty Tim," and "The Mystery of Gilgal," all "true grit and human natur." True, he is the author of *Castilian Days*, a very delightsome book, which was inspired by residence for a time in Spain, and is joint-author with his friend Mr. John G. Nicolay of a voluminous work on the life and times of Abraham Lincoln. But even adding these—and admitting the latter to be a work of gigantic effort and masterly execution—we have still no hesitation in saying that the author's European reputation is not greater with them than it would have been without them. By the sweat of his brow one may earn his bread in literature as elsewhere; but a literary reputation is earned only "with brains, sir," moved to ripest issues.

Colonel Hay, we are proud to discover, has Scottish blood in his veins, being descended from a Scottish soldier, John Hay, who at the beginning of last century left his native land to take service under the Elector-Palatine, and whose son went afterwards with his family to settle among the Kentucky pioneers. The poet, whose father was a medical practitioner, was born at Salem, Indiana, in the heart of the United States, in October 1838. When twenty years old he graduated at the neighbouring Brown University, where his fellow-students, we are told, valued his skill as a writer. There he studied for the Bar, to which he was "called" three years later, at Springfield, Illinois. It was here that Abraham Lincoln, who subsequently played so conspicuous a part in the history of America, practised as a barrister.

The shrewd, lively, earnest, honest character of the popular President is known to everybody. In his capacity as a lawyer even he grudged help to a rogue.

"In a criminal case," says Professor Morley, "when evidence threw unexpected light upon a client's character, Abraham Lincoln said suddenly to his junior, 'Swett, the man is guilty; you defend him, I can't.' In another case, when a piece of rascality in his client came out, Abraham Lincoln left his junior in possession of the case and went to his hotel. To the Judge, who sent for him, he replied that he found his hands were very dirty, and he had gone away to get them clean."

Speaking of Lincoln and Springfield, I am tempted to tell a story here—one that is not much known on this side—though not one of all the thousand and one stories that are current about the good President affords a more vivid and delightful illustration of the ready wit and overpowering humour of the man. It is the story of his first election speech.

When Lincoln's neighbours proposed that he should run for the Legislature, and he had accepted the nomination, like the honest business man that he was, he went straight to the village out in Illinois where his opponent lived, there to begin his campaign. As he entered the place the house of the other candidate was pointed out to him, and he observed a tall spire of iron attached to it, and inquired what it meant. He had never before seen a lightning-rod, and did not know what it was. This was the only house in the town so defended, and as the man running against Lincoln did not bear a very good moral character, the future President was quick to take advantage of the fact.

Both candidates appeared on the platform to state their opinions, the one after the other, to a mass meeting of the free and independent electors of the district. The other man spoke first. He had been in Congress before, and he asked his hearers if they were going to

throw him over for an unheard-of man—for somebody whom nobody knew anything about.

When he had finished, Lincoln stepped quietly forward—an uncouth, lanky-looking fellow—and said—"Neighbours, friends, I acknowledge to you that you down here don't know much about me. I have never had many opportunities, and I am not much known to the people of this Section. But," he added, "I thank God that I have never led such a life in this or any other community that I've got to put up lightning-rods on my house to protect me from the righteous vengeance of the Almighty."

The crowd cheered, and laughed itself into hysterics, and Abraham's opponent sat utterly discomfited—and, of course, lost at the poll.

Young lawyer Hay had been only a very short time in practice at Springfield when Abraham Lincoln was elected President, and he was asked to "check his trunks" to Washington, and assume the office of Assistant Secretary. When the struggle between North and South ensued he became aide-de-camp to the President, and was actively employed both at headquarters and on the field of battle. For a time he served under Generals Hunter and Gillmore, became a Colonel in the army of the North, and served also as Assistant Adjutant-General.

When the hurly-burly was over Colonel Hay went to Paris as Secretary of Legation. After remaining in that office for two years he went as *Chargé d'Affaires* for the United States to Vienna. From here he passed to Madrid, and became Secretary of Legation under General Daniel Sickles. In 1870 he returned to America, and for the next five years was attached to the editorial staff of the *New York Tribune*. It was for this paper

he wrote his famous *Pike County Ballads*, which caused such a stir on their original appearance that they were immediately re-issued in collected form, and circulated far and wide.

In 1876 Colonel Hay removed fron New York, and made his home in Cleveland, Ohio, ceasing from then to take part in the editing of the *Tribune*, though he continued friendly service as a writer to its columns. It was early in the eighties that he commenced, in conjunction with his friend John G. Nicolay, to write for *The Century Magazine* the full memoir of Abraham Lincoln. That they were admirably equipped for the work is shown by their own statement:—"We knew Mr. Lincoln intimately before his election to the Presidency. We came from Illinois to Washington with him, and remained at his side and in his service—separately or together—until the day of his death." This gigantic work has since reappeared in ten large volumes.

But that is a matter that will interest my readers less than to know something more regarding, and to "gust their gabs" with, a slice of some of those very toothsome *Pike County Ballads* of which I have spoken. And I am fain myself to come to these. It is because of his *Pike County Ballads* that we know or care anything about John Hay. His name is precious to us, and his history is interesting, because of "Jim Bludso," and because of "Little Breeches." What about the latter? The father tells the story. He says:—

> "I don't go much on religion,
> I never ain't had no show;
> But I've got a middlin' tight grip
> On the handful o' things I know.

I don't pan out on the prophets.
An' freewill, an' that sort o' thing;
But I b'lieve in God an' the angels,
Ever since one night last spring.

I come into town with some turnips,
An' my little Gabe came along;
No four-year-old in the county
Could come him for pretty and strong;
Peart, and chipper, an' sassy,
Always ready to swear an' fight;
An' I'd larn't him to chew terbaccer,
Jest to keep his milk-teeth white.

The snow came down like a blanket
As I passed by Taggart's store;
I went in for a jug o' molasses,
An' left the team at the door.
They scar't at somethin' an' started,
I heer'd one little squall;
An' hell-to-split over the prairie
Went team, little Breeches, an' all.

Hell-to-split over the prairie,
I was almost froze with skeer;
But we rousted up some torches
An' searched for 'em far an' near;
At last we struck horses an' waggon,
Snowed under a soft white mound,
Upsot; dead beat; but of little Gabe
No hide nor hair was found.

An' here all hope soured on me
Of my fellow-critters' aid,
I jest flopped down on my marrow-bones,
Crotch deep in the snow;—an' prayed.

. . . . . .

By this the torches was played out,
An' me an' Isrul Parr
Went off for some wood to a sheep-fold
That he said was somewhere thar.

We found it at last, an' a little shed
  Where they shut up the lambs at night,
We looked in, an' seen 'em huddled thar,
  So warm, an' sleepy, an' white,
An' *thar* sot little Breeches, and chirped
  As peert as ever you see ;
'I want a chaw o' terbaccer,
  An' that's what's the matter of me !'

How did he get thar ?—Angels !—
  He could never have walked in that storm ;
They jest scooped down and toted him
  To whar it was safe an' warm.
An' I hold that saving a little child,
  An' bringing him to his own,
Is a derned sight better business
  Than loafin' aroun' the Throne !

There is the "true grit and human natur'" I spoke of. In that poem Bret Harte is met on his own ground, and equalled, if not actually excelled. To some readers the last verse will convey a smack of blasphemy. But it is all so honest and true to the character and circumstances of the case that most people will esteem the author all the more for his daring. They will stand by him again when he assumes the character of Sergeant Tilmon Joy, too. The sergeant is a man of rude speech, but he has a noble heart in his breast. Banty Tim "trumped Death's ace" for him one day; and now when Tim is in a corner he is not to be so mean a cuss as would be "goin' back on him." We need not quote all the poem, but here is the case for Tim, in the sergeant's own picturesque and vigorous language :—

Now dog my cats if I kin see,
  In all the light of the day,
What you've got to do with the question
  Ef Tim shall go or stay.

And furder than that I give notice,
  If one of you tetches the boy,
He can check his trunks to a warmer climes
  Than he'll find in Illanoy.

Why, blame your hearts, jest hear me!
  You know that ungodly day
When our left struck Vicksburg Heights, how ripped
  And torn and tattered we lay.
When the rest retreated I stayed behind,
  Fur reasons sufficient to me—
With a rib caved in, and a leg on strike,
  I sprawled on that cursed glacee.

Lord! how the hot sun went for us,
  And br'iled and blistered and burned!
How the Rebel bullets whizzed round us.
  When a cuss in his death-grip turned!
Till along toward dusk I seen a thing
  I couldn't believe for a spell:
That nigger—that Tim—was a-crawlin' to me
  Through that fireproof, gilt-edged hell.

The Rebels seen him as quick as me,
  And the bullets buzzed like bees;
But he jumped for me, and shouldered me,
  Though a shot brought him once to his knees;
But he staggered up, and packed me off,
  With a dozen stumbles and falls,
Till safe in our lines he dropped us both,
  His black hide riddled with balls.

So, my gentle gazelles, thar's my answer,
  And here stays Banty Tim;
He trumped Death's ace for me that day,
  And I'm not going back on him!
You may rezoloot till the cows come home,
  But if one of you tetches the boy,
He'll wrastle his hash to-night in hell,
  Or my name's not Tilmon Joy.

We like a man who can write like that! and we like a man who discovers heroes in every-day clothing—among drivers of stage-coaches and among engineers, where they are to be found as frequently as in more conspicuous places. Bret Harte certainly showed the way in this. But he has had worthy followers in our own Alexander Anderson, with his story of "Jack Chiddy," and in Colonel John Hay, with his records of "Golyer's Ben" and "Jim Bludso." What of "Jim"?—

JIM BLUDSO.

Wall, no! I can't tell whar he lives
  Because he don't live, you see;
Leastways, he's got out of the habit
  Of livin' like you and me.
Whar have you been for the last three year
  That you haven't heard folks tell
How Jimmy Bludso passed in his checks
  The night of the *Prairie Belle?*

He weren't no saint—them engineers
  Is pretty much all alike,
One wife at Natchez-under-the-Hill
  And another one here in Pike.
A keerless man in his talk was Jim,
  And an awkward hand in a row;
But he never flunked and he never lied,
  I reckon he didn't know how.

And this was all the religion he had—
  To treat his engine well;
Never be passed on the river;
  To mind the pilot's bell.
And if ever the *Prairie Belle* took fire,
  A thousand times he swore
He'd hold her nozzle agin the bank
  Till the last soul got ashore.

All boats has their day on the Mississip,
And the *Belle's* turn came at last;
The *Movastar* was a better boat,
But the *Belle*—she wouldn't be passed.
And so came tearin' along that night,
The oldest craft on the line,
With a nigger squat on her safety-valve,
And her furnace crammed, rosin and pine.

The fire burst out as she clared the bar,
And burnt a hole in the night,
And quick as a flash, she turned, and made
For that willow bank on the right.
There was runnin' and shoutin', but Jem yelled out
Over all the infernal roar,
"I'll hold her nozzle agin the bank
Till the last galoot's ashore."

Through the hot black breath of the burning boat
Jim Bludso's voice was heard;
And they all had trust in his cussedness,
And knowed he would keep his word.
And, sure's your born, they all got off,
Before the smokestacks fell,
And Bludso's ghost went up alone
In the smoke of the *Prairie Belle*.

He weren't no saint, but at jedgment
I'd run my chance with Jim,
'Longside of some pious gentlemen
That wouldn't shook hands with him.
He seen his duty—a dead-sure thing,
And went for it thar an' then;
And Christ ain't a-goin' to be too hard
On a man that died for men.

In a lighter vein the author dilates on the "Mystery of Gilgal," which was all "'long of a drink at Taggart's Bar," and reveals with rare humour the chequered history of "The Pledge of Spunky Point." But these,

perforce, must be "passed as read" to leave room for the still more delightsome tale, with its healthy and unobtrusive moral, to wit, the tale of

THE ENCHANTED SHIRT.

The king was sick. His cheek was red,
And his eye was clear and bright;
He ate and drank with a kingly zest,
And peacefully snored at night.

But he said he was sick, and a king should know,
And doctors came by the score,
They did not cure him. He cut off their heads,
And sent to the schools for more.

At last two famous doctors came,
And one was as poor as a rat,
He had passed his time in studious toil,
And never found time to grow fat.

The other had never looked into a book;
His patients gave him no trouble;
If they recovered, they paid him well;
If they died, their heirs paid double.

Together they looked at the royal tongue,
As the king on his couch reclined;
In succession they thumped his august chest,
But no trace of disease could find.

The old sage said, "You're as sound as a nut."
"Hang him up," roared the king in a gale—
In a ten-knot gale of royal rage;
The other leech grew a shade pale;

But he pensively rubbed his sagacious nose,
And thus his prescription ran:
The king will be well, if he sleeps one night
In the Shirt of a Happy Man.

. . . . . .

Wide o'er the realm the couriers rode,
And fast their horses ran,
And many they saw, and to many they spoke,
But they found no Happy Man.

They saw two men by the roadside sit,
And both bemoaned their lot;
For one had buried his wife, he said,
And the other one had not.

At last they came to a village gate,
A beggar lay whistling there!
He whistled, and sang, and laughed, and rolled
On the grass in the soft June air.

The weary courtiers paused and looked
At the scamp so blithe and gay;
And one of them said, "Heaven save you, friend!
You seem to be happy to-day."

"O yes, fair sirs," the rascal laughed,
And his voice rang free and glad;
"An idle man has so much to do
That he never has time to be sad."

"This is our man," the courier said;
"Our luck has led us aright.
I will give you a hundred ducats, friend,
For the loan of your shirt to-night."

The merry blackguard lay back on the grass,
And laughed till his face was black;
"I would do it, God wot," and he roared with the fun,
"But I haven't a shirt to my back."

. . . . . .

Each day to the king the reports came in
Of his unsuccessful spies,
And the sad panorama of human woes
Passed daily under his eyes.

And he grew ashamed of his useless life,
And his maladies hatched in gloom ;
He opened his windows and let the air
Of the free heaven into his room.

And out he went into the world, and toiled
In his own appointed way ;
And the people blessed him, and the land was glad,
And the king was well and gay.

Colonel Hay, many years ago, married the daughter of Mr. Amasa Stone, an Ohio millionaire, who brought her husband a handsome dowry. Their residence in Washington is one of the largest and most elegant in the city. They have four children, two daughters—the eldest of whom inherits her father's poetic gifts—and two sons.

The recent announcement that Colonel John Hay was to succeed Mr. Bayard as United States Ambassador in London, was received generally with the pleasing anticipation that his presence in this country will keep alive and in robust health the traditions which have gathered around an office already held by Mr. Charles Francis Adams, Mr. Motley, Mr. Lowell, Mr. Phelps, and Mr. Bayard. But he will always be most widely known as the author of *Pike County Ballads.*

BILL NYE.

BILL NYE, who died less than a year ago, was a humourous writer of rare fertility, power, and variety, whose weekly contributions to periodical literature, were more extensively circulated and read than the pen-work of perhaps any other American author of this century; and he made, probably, the largest literary income of any journalist of his own time. Bill—or to give him his full-dress name — William Edgar Nye, was a native of the State of Maine, and was born in August, 1856. When he was two or three years old, his parents migrated West, where, after receiving an ordinary education at the public school, the as yet undiscovered humourist studied law, and became an attorney. As a legal luminary he did not shine so as to dazzle the eyes of the community. As a lawyer, indeed, to use his own graphic expression, he "did not make enough to keep a cat," so he drifted into journalism, where his funny bump developed so strongly that he was encouraged to "set up" as a professional humourist. His first newspaper connection

was made in Laramie, Wyoming, and his comic sketches to the *Boomerang* of that city soon made his name and the paper alike famous. By and by he began to make contributions to eastern journals, and foreseeing the market that was then just opening up for syndicated matter, he moved to New York, and established himself as the pioneer syndicater of America, his weekly letter appearing in hundreds of newspapers, large and small, throughout the States. These letters, which he continued to the close of his life, brought him in, as I have said, perhaps the largest yearly income of any humourous writer to the periodical press—a little over a thousand dollars a week, which, reckoning the dollar at 4s. 2d., made the enormous total of more than ten thousand pounds a year. A ready and effective speaker, Bill Nye also made large sums by lecturing, in conjunction with his friend, James Whitcomb Riley, the poet, with whom he made periodical stumping tours all over the Union.

In person Mr. Nye was tall and broad, though not stout, and was clean shaven, and very bald, with lightish hair. He spoke in a low, distinct voice, and, when on the platform, put on a strong Yankee drawl, which enhanced the piquancy of his remarks. In 1893 he made a short visit, his first, to this country, and was present at the historic dinner given to Emile Zola by the Authors' Club in London.

Nye's writing, largely, of course, on account of its nature, was of an ephemeral kind, but several collections of his comic stories of the Wild West have appeared, including *Boomerang Shots*, and *Hits and Skits*, etc. In the first of these there is a poem, "The Miner's Protegee," that would not discredit the muse of Bret Harte himself, the universally acknowledged laureate of

American mining life. This I must quote. It should make a capital public reading :—

THE MINERS' PROTÉGÉE.

Wal, you see, it's a queer story, Missy ;
The little gal's none of our kin ;
But, you bet, when the old men go under,
She's the one who will handle our tin.
My pard an' me's rough minin' fellers,
We've got nary children nor wife,
But we love little yellow-haired Nellie,
An' we'll rear her up right—bet yer life.

How old ? Wal, she's nigh eight, I reckon ;
Five years since we brought her out here ;
An' she was the cunnin'est baby
We'd looked at for many a year.
You see, 'twas the time the Apaches
Broke out. Oh, them red imps of sin !
The emigrant train crossed their trail, Miss,
An' the Injuns, they scooped em' all in.

Yes, thar lay men, children, an' wimmin ;
The red devils raised all their ha'r.
We couldn't do nothin' to help 'em,
So my pard an' me buried 'em thar.
We found one likely-lookin' young creetur'
Lyin' out from the rest of the heap.
She was dead, like the rest, an' Nellie
Lay close by her side—fast asleep.

Wal, 'twas nigh ninety mile to the settling—
Bill an' me turned the thing in our mind ;
An' at last we concluded to keep her,
An' bring her up lovin' an' kind.
We buried her poor dad an' mammy,
Likewise all their unlucky mates,
An' we named her Nell, arter a sweetheart
My pard had once back in the States.

But the trouble we had with that young 'un
Was somethin' quite funny to see;
Bill gave her up for a mystery,
Likewise she was too much for me.
Her durned duds we could'nt get on right,
An' we cussed ev'ry but'n an' string;
But arter a spell we did better
When we once got the hang of the thing.

An' she growed up quite pert-like an' bloomin'.
We take her to work ev'ry day,
While Bill an' me's busy a-minin',
She'll sit by the rock-pile an' play.
An' she's made better men of us both, Miss,
We don't cuss now, nor go on no spree,
'Cause we're workin' an' savin' for Nellie,
The pride of my old pard an' me.

There is heart's blood in these verses enough to make one wish that the author had written more in the same vein. But it was seldom he dropped into verse at all—and not because he rhymed "with deeficulty," as the old Scottish editor joked, for he evidently owned a cantering, sprightly Pegasus, and, I presume, could not himself explain why he trotted her out so seldom. When once or twice again he does "lisp in numbers" the mood, if not the mode, is different; and in this latter—his naturally laughing, chaffing way—we discover a capital example in a set of verses describing

THAT AWFUL COW-BOY.

He wore but half his braces,
And with neither coat nor vest;
He was on most fast races
In a peaceful tour out West;
His muddy homespun trousers
Were in his bootlegs stuck,
And his yells at times, old rousers,
He said were "just for luck."

He had a big horse-pistol,
  And he stated he could smash
A small-sized watch's crystal
  At a hundred yards, for cash.
He wore no tie or collar,
  And his shirt, not over fine,
Cost just one half a dollar
  In the days of "Auld Lang Syne."

He scorned the town officials,
  Unmindful of their stars,
And carved uncouth initials
  On the village liquor bars.
He seemed to have no money,
  And whene'er he took a drink,
He called the landlord "sonny,"
  And paid him with a wink.

With noisy song and whistle
  He on a horse-block sat,
And fired his old horse-pistol
  At the mayor's bee-gum hat.
He paled the ladies' faces
  With his loud, sardonic laugh,
And made uncouth grimaces
  At the constable and staff.

But a fellow met this cow-boy,
  And caught him by the ear,
And said, quite coolly, "Now, boy,
  'Tis time you get from here!"
Then he shook up his digestion
  In a way that raised a laugh.
And proved beyond a question
  That the cow-boy was a calf.

Now, that is quite delicious in its way, too, and pictures the average Cow-boy, I am persuaded, with the accuracy of a photographic camera. Rough and rare heroes there are among them, no doubt, but bounce more than bottom is the characteristic feature of a

good many of the Cow-boy fraternity, and don't you believe anything else.

There is no subject on earth that Bill Nye could not write about in a humourous way. Even the stolid and indecorous mule engaged his frequent attention in his eternal way of making funny copy. He assumed to have a mule of his own. Perhaps he had several, but to one in particular—his literary mule—he gave the charmingly distinctive name of "Boomerang," and this, as he said, "because you never know when he is going to strike." Boomerang was a perpetual surprise to him in this respect, and a protracted acquaintance with the "half-hoss, half-jackass," taught his owner to meet him face to face when business had to be transacted between them. "In his youth," says Nye, "Boomerang yearned to be the trick-mule of a circus, but though he fitted himself up for that profession he finds himself, in the decline of life, with his bright anticipations nothing but a vast and robust ruin. About all the relaxation he has is to induce some trusting stranger to caress his favourite chilblain, and then he kicks the confiding stranger so high that he can count the lamp-posts on the streets of New York."

That is humour of the type most prevalent among recent American humourists. James M. Bailey might have written it, or Max Adeler, or Mark Twain for that matter. But Bill Nye had other ways of reaching the funny bone in humanity, some of which are more peculiarly his own. Perhaps his humour is never so rich as when it is dashed with a spice of sarcasm. And that just reminds me of an excellent example. It has a well-known English dramatist for its subject, who in his early career made no small notoriety for himself by posturing as the Apostle of Astheticism, and lecturing

on dress reform, etc. Like other great men—and all who reckon themselves in that lot—he went to America to lecture the people there, and—as some thought—not so much with the hope of producing good in them as with the hope of filling his own pockets. But, be that as it may, he lectured in America at anyrate, and lectured the Americans, and his closing remarks about the country contained these pertinent words:—"It is in the decay of manners that the thoughtful and well-bred American has cause for regret. I have repeatedly said this, but I am told in reply, 'We are still a young country, and you must not be too severe upon us.' 'Yes,' I answer, 'but when your country was still younger its manners were better.' They have never been equal since to what they were in Washington's time, a man whose manners were irreproachable."

Bill Nye's reply should not be soon forgotten by the party to whom it was addressed. "Yes, sir," he said, "you are in a manner correct. Our manners are a little decayed. So, also, were the eggs with which you were greeted in some of our cities. That may have given you a wrong impression as to our manners and their state of health. We just want to straighten out any little error of judgment on your part as to American customs, and to impress upon your mind the fact that the decayed article, in most cases, you considered our miasma-impregnated etiquette, was what is known among savants as decayed cabbage. You should remember, sir, there is a wide difference between custom and cabbage. We are not bragging on our cabbage at all. It is a good, fair, average style of fruit for a new country, where the cut-worm and the Hessian fly go up and down seeking what they may devour; but we rather bank on our free, open, glad, spontaneous

welcome for foreigners who come to this country in deshabille and lecture to us on the 'whence' and call our attention to the contiguity of the 'immediate.' That's what we brag on. We are just as full of kindness and Western hospitality in such cases as can be. We may drink out of the finger-bowl in a moment of thoughtlessness; but we greeted you, sir, with all our great wealth of earnest, cordial hospitality, and put you in the best bedroom that opened off the parlour, and we just turned you loose among our bric-a-brac as though you had been a cultivated gentleman instead of an imported ass. When you wiped your beak on a liver-coloured handkerchief, or smiled and showed the world your wealth of palate, did we laugh at you? No, we did not. We concealed our mirth until you had gone away. Now, with pockets full of American dollars, and your knickerbocker clothes frescoed with embryo hen, you go home to the Old Farm across the Water and intimate that the American people are using manners that are decayed.

You came to us with a sun-flower and a glad smile, and you returned with money enough to keep you from want as long as your unprofitable life is spared. You came to us with your teeth sticking out into the uncertain future and your shoulder-blades bathed in the glorious past, and you said to us:

'I am the advance agent of true art; I am the long-legged avant-courier of the Blue Butter-jar, with the Consumptive Lily painted on it. I come to announce a great reform in decorations for the world.'

Was it strange, then, that we brought out a few little symphonies in diseased ruta bagas and epidemic eggs, and showed you how we used them in our crude style of decoration? Can you not see at a glance that we

belong to a wild, barbaric, and peculiar people? Here we have been for over a hundred years without an opportunity only once in a while to see some one from the Old Country, and with isolated chances to see what was the correct thing, and do you expect us, here in the woods with Indians all around us, to know just how to act?

Because Providence planted you in the midst of Gospel privileges, and threw in your way all the advantages of early education, so that you could sign your name to a madrigal in such a way that no living man could read it; because, we say, you have had those glorious opportunities thrown in your way, and we, in the meantime, have been standing off Old Snipe-on-Toast and other sanguinary savages here in the land of the brave and the home of the free, you are now going to hold us up to ridicule, are you, you white-livered cadaver with moth-eaten lungs, just because, as a nation, we pick our teeth at the table with the sugar-tongs and rob the home of the setting hen, that we may fill the bosom of the bogus lecturer with fragrant memories of this free land?

That's no way to treat a healthy, growing people, sir, and you ought to be ashamed of yourself."

It was rough on Oscar, but not more severe than was justified by the priggishness of the initial criticism. We say, take it, then, and welcome. But enough on that score, and now let us sample the author's humour in another place. We are in luck; it is verse again, and tells of

ONE REAL GOOD INDIAN.

"Are there no real good Injuns?"
The cowboy raised his head,
And, glancing at the tenderfoot,
He turned to him, and said:

" I rode the prairies, pardner,
Ten years in rain or sun,
But as to real good Injuns,
I ain't met more'n one.

" A swig o' that horse liniment,
An' then I'll try to place
This A 1 virtuous redskin
That for goodness trumped the ace.

" 'Twas at the bar at Mack's Ford,
A lot of boys one day
Got making things quite lively
In a ball and cartridge way.

" I banged around about me,
And did'nt count the odds—
I'd been soaking electricity
Like fifty lightning rods—

" When suddenly the Sheriff
And his gang came bounding down,
And the boys took to their cattle,
And dusted out o' town.

" But something was the matter
With my headworks, I dare say,
For I stumbled by the roadside,
And couldn't find my way.

" And the next I can remember
It was night and pitchy black,
And I tried to strike the trail from there
But couldn't hit a track.

" And I was mighty dizzy,
And I felt I should have died,
When standing just before me
An Injun's shape I spied.

" He held his hands out to me,
But didn't say a word ;
And when I tried to hail him,
He neither spoke nor stirred.

"And then I slipped in somehow
Between each sturdy arm,
And he let me down so gentle
Without a bit o' harm.

"And I lay there quite contented,
And slept until 'twas day,
And woke to find him watching
At my side the same old way.

"So I climbed upon my uprights,
And a word I couldn't say,
But I looked the red man in the face.
And then—I sneaked away.

"We parted. But as years pass by,
I wonder more and more
If still that real good Injun stands
At Mack's tobacco store."

These verses, I know, have been frequently printed as anonymous by well informed American editors; but I find them included in one of the published collections of Bill Nye's comic sketches, printed in his life-time, and consequently conclude that they are his.

The final sample here of this alert and facile writer will go home pleasure-laden to the hearts of all men who have once or more in the course of their weary lives been found

WRESTLING WITH A CARPET.

"The pens of some of the most learned and able writers of the age have been directed to showing up the horrible suffering a man endures putting up pictures, fitting curtains, and other delightful and refreshing household duties, but the grand labour which devolves upon many family men about the Spring time of the year of putting down a carpet, has not received the attention it deserves.

"If you see a man at this season with a weary, sad,

dejected look in his face, his back bent forward and weak, his thumbs and fingers wrapped up in rags saturated in arnica, and who walks with an uncertain, limping halt, like a knee-sprung horse, it is pretty safe to believe that he has just been through the annual free-for-all Wrestling Match with a Carpet.

"There is probably no other household duty that devolves upon a man that he so heartily despises as that of tying his legs up in a double-bow-knot, doubling himself up in a little wad over a Carpet, and striving between gasps for breath and muttered imprecations to hit a little insignificant tin-tack in the corner of a room. The tin-tack persists in standing on its head just at the time when the man plies the hammer with a frenzied effort, and he stops a moment to let about four gallons of perspiration soak out of him.

"It is worth double the price of admission to watch a man put down a Carpet, and men who are not troubled with such laborious and heart-rending duties have been known to go more miles to see a man attempt to 'down' a rebellious Carpet, than they would to see the biggest prize fight that ever was. From the time the victim begins to think about his prospective task he is wild, and grows wilder, until the grand tableau that usually takes place about the time the task is half finished, and puffing like a whale, and swearing at every jump, he goes down town and hires a man to come up and tackle the Carpet.

"But he usually commences by taking the Carpet in a roll and throwing it in the centre of the room, where he stands and glares at it, and swears he will have it down in fifteen minutes at the outside. He drags a corner of the Carpet up into a corner of the room, and puts in the first tin-tack 'just as easy,' and he keeps on along one side of the room, driving in a tack, hammer-

ing the 'skirt-boards,' and knocking his thumb and fingers at every other rap.

"Then he gets wilder. He proceeds to stand or sit on the very part of the Carpet that he wants to stretch up to the side of the room, and he pants like a locomotive, and wears off some more skin from his hands. His knees get more tender every minute, he gets a crick in the back, and he perspires like a tin water-cooler on a hot summer day.

"About this time he is so mad that it seems as though he would burst, and his boots are full of perspiration, and he makes a last convulsive effort to lift the edge of the Carpet that he is standing on, and hold it in place with his teeth, and with his head wedged against the wall, he strikes wildly at where he supposes the tin-tack to be, and mashes his thumb flatter than stale beer. He jumps up with a yell, and swears that is the last time he will ever touch a Carpet, and goes and hires the plumber's secretary to do it, just as he always has done before."

Mr. Nye lived permanently in a palatial residence at Buck Shoals, North Carolina, where, in spite of his wide reputation as a humourist, he was best known as Mrs. Nye's husband.

An excellent woman, it appears, is Mrs. Edgar Wilson Nye. Known of the poor of the mountains for her liberal and judicious benevolence, and was esteemed by her husband as his guardian angel—the pink of womankind. They were indeed, by all accounts, a happy pair, and together with their four children, enjoyed the luxury of a harmonious and delightsome home circle.

To be *a man*, and be beloved at home, is more than to be a humourist and be esteemed abroad. To be both is admirable. Such was Bill Nye.

CHARLES GODFREY LELAND.

ONE, and not by any means the least entertaining, of the score of American humourists whose writings are familiar on this side of the "Herring Pond," Charles Godfrey Leland is best known as the author of the quaint and laughable *Hans Breitmann Ballads*, first published many years ago. Best known as a humourist by this little work, I say, but, like his friends Russell Lowell and Wendell Holmes, the author of *Hans Breitmann* is more than a humourist, and to estimate aright the length and breadth, and height and depth, of his literary character and standing as a man of letters, we have to take a wider view than is suggested by the work in question. We have to note his scholarly translation of Heine—of itself sufficient to make a literary reputation. We have to mark his volumes of travel, and make record of other books of

verse, as well as of his numerous and valuable contributions to legendary and folk-lore, and of his painstaking and successful researches into the language and history, and song-literature, of the English gypsies.

Mr. Leland was born at Philadelphia, in August, 1824, and graduated at Princeton in 1846. Subsequently, he studied æsthetics, history, philosophy, and the modern languages in the Universities of Heidleberg and Munich, and latterly at Paris. In 1848 he returned to Philadelphia, where he studied law, and was admitted to the bar in 1851. He had previously, however, been dabbling in literature—from his fifteenth year, indeed—and very soon he bade a final good-bye to the legal calling, and set up as a professional *litterateur*, and contributed to the *Knickerbocker Magazine*, the *International*, *Sartain's*, *Graham's*, and other periodicals. At the beginning of the civil war he wrote in support of a vigorous National policy, and established in Boston the *Continental Magazine*, in which he proposed and urged the emancipation of the slaves. When "Woe to the North" was the fear in every heart Mr. Leland was boldly declaring by voice and pen that if the North would only keep up their hearts utter ruin of the South was inevitable, and that for the North there was close at hand such a period of prosperity as no one ever dreamed of—that every factory would soon double its buildings, and prices would rise beyond all precedent. People, he tells us, thought he was mad, and the *New York Times* compared his utterances to the outpourings of a fanatical Puritan in the time of Cromwell. No man, perhaps, ever prophesied so directly in the face of public opinion, and had his predictions so accurately fulfilled. They were, of course, fulfilled to the letter, as every schoolboy is aware. About this time Mr. Leland became intimately

acquainted with Emerson, Longfellow, Lowell, Holmes, Whippel, Ticknor, Agassiz, in a word, with all the brilliant circle that shone when Boston was at its brightest in the early 'sixties. He was frequently invited to the famous Saturday dinners where on more than one occasion he had the honour of a seat beside Emerson and Holmes. This fact he has himself been careful to note in his recently published *Memoirs*. After editing for a time the *Philadelphia Press*, which prospered under his management, Mr. Leland, in 1869, came to Europe, and remained till 1880, residing chiefly in London, where he pursued his original investigations into the history and language and customs of the Romany race, and collected the songs of the English gypsies, in conjunction with his friend Professor Palmer. Among nearly two dozen volumes which have been written or edited by Mr. Leland some of the more notable are *The Poetry and Mystery of Dreams*, containing the fruit of curious researches in ancient and modern literature, *Pictures of Travel*, translated from the German of Heinrich Heine, *Sunshine in Thought*, *Legends of Birds*, *The Gypsies: with Sketches of the English, Welsh, Russian, and Austrian Romany*, and *Songs of the English Gypsies*, dedicated, by permission, to the late Lord Tennyson.

These belong to the class of works, laborious and interesting, on which an author might reasonably hope and desire to found a reputation. But the fact that they are known only to a limited circle, whilst the slight and flighty *Breitmann Ballads* have been read and admired all over Britain and America proves in eloquent fashion the universal favour that waits on whatsoever is touched with the living fire of original humour. It is no rash statement to say that nine-tenths of

Mr. Leland's fame as a poet and author rests on this slim and unpretentious collection of humorous dialect verses. The hero, "Breitmann," is said to have been one Jost, a German trooper, of the Fifteenth Pennsylvannia Volunteer Cavalry, and the language employed is the broken speech used by the millions of German emigrants who have found a home within the bounds of the Great Republic. Hans, the commonest of all Christian names in Germany, is just the equivalent of our John, and Breitmann (broad or huge man), has the hint in it of a big, swaggering, burly boaster. The ballad of "Breitmann's Barty," the first in the collection, and the best, has always been the most popular, and we must quote that entire :—

HANS BREITMANN'S BARTY.

Hans Breitmann gif a barty ;
  Dey hat biano-blayin' ;
I fell'd in luf mit a 'Merican frau,
  Her name vas Madilda Yane.
She hat haar ash prown ash a pretzel,
  Her eyes vas himmel-plue ;
Und ven dey looket indo mine,
  Dey shplit mine heart in doo.

Hans Breitmann gif a barty,
  I vent dere, you'll be pound ;
I valtz't mit Madilda Yane,
  Und vent slipinnen' rount and rount.
Der pootiest Fraulein in der hause,
  She vay'd 'pout doo hoondred pount,
Und efery time she gif a shoomp
  She made der vinders sound.

Hans Breitmann gif a barty,
  I dell you, it cosht him dear ;
Dey rolled in more ash sefen kecks
  Of foost-rate lager-peer.

Und venefer dey knocks der shpicket in
Der Deutschers gifs a cheer ;
I dinks dat so vine a barty
Nefer coom too a het dis year.

Hans Breitmann gif a barty,
Dere all vash Souse und Brouse,
Ven der sooper comed in de gompany
Did make demselfs to house ;
Dey ate das Brot und Gensy broost,
De Bratwurst und Braten vine,
Und vash der Abendessen down
Mit vour parrels ov Neckerwein.

Hans Breitmann gif a barty,
Ve all cot troonk ash bigs,
I poot mine mout' to a parrel of peer
Und emptied it oop mit a schwigs ;
Und den I giss'd Madilda Yane,
Und she schlog me on der kop,
Und der gompany vighted mit dable-lecks
Dill der Coonshtable mate oos shtop.

Hans Breitmann gif a barty—
Vhere ish dat barty now ?
Vhere ish der lufly colden gloud
Dat float on der mountain's prow ?
Vhere ish de himmelstrahlende stern—
De shtar of de shpirit's light !
All gon'd afay mit der lager-peer—
Afay in de ewigkeit !

That the *Ballads* were suggested by Lowell's *Biglow Papers* seems fairly evident, although the conglomorate character of the German-American citizen has been so well portrayed here that there are few actual points of resemblance between the two compositions. The German element in America, we may guess, would not relish the skits. The social failings and political shortcomings of the typical "Hans" are too severely satirized

and burlesqued to make that likely. Indeed, there is just rather too much "Saus and Braus" (riot and bustle), too much swigging of lager-beer, too many cuss words sprinkled through the poems—and cusses, too, without cause—to make them so thoroughly enjoyable as they otherwise would be. That "Hans Breitmann" represents a distinct type of German character is undoubtedly true. But so also does the "Yawcob Strauss" of Charles Follen Adams, and the latter selection is ever so much more happy and pleasing, while it is not a whit less humourous or less true. These objections notwithstanding, the *Breitmann Ballads* are vastly clever, and have enjoyed a wonderful popularity; and they will continue to interest and tickle the minds of men. Even in the scholarly notes to the ballads—forming as they do a limited phrase-Dictionary—there is so much interesting information that the curious reader is pleased to browse there alone on occasional openings of the book. Here we find the origins of many popular slang expressions like "Dead-head," "Sound on the Goose," and "It's O. K." The account of the latter is worth repeating. "O. K.," as it appears here, had its origin in the following circumstances. Previous to a Presidential Election, the political parties in the larger American towns have processions to parade their strength. In New York, about the year 1845, one district was distinguished by a banner bearing the strange device: "The Fourth Ward O. K." Next day everybody who had seen the sight neglected business to compare notes with others as to its signification. At last the public bewilderment rose to such a height that one individual, more curious than the rest, resolved to beard the author-sphynx in his den. He went to the Secretary of the 4th Ward Democratic Committee, who, surprised

at such ignorance, loftily exclaimed: "The Old Fourth having got tired of stale mottoes, has, for novelty's sake, adopted a commercial one from our leading merchants. Don't they say, when they would affirm that a clerk can be implicitly relied upon to produce a balance on the right side, 'OLL KORRECT!'" The banner-painter acted up to his instructions in the way that we have seen, and thus O. K. became current literature. And now, it is a curious fact, that the telegraph clerks, both in Great Britain and America, at this moment, employ these letters when replying to a telegram which has asked whether a certain message has been received "All Correct."

But this is a parenthesis: and now we return to Mr. Charles Godfrey Leland, humourist and author. Not, however, to refer further to the *Hans Breitmann Ballads*, but to chose a poem from one of the author's other books which the general reader will more easily cypher out, and will much more thoroughly appreciate, I refer to "Carey of Carson," than which there are few poems more redolent of the American soil. Had Mr. Leland never written another line, this bit of verse of itself would entitle him to a place among the poets and humourists of his country.

CAREY OF CARSON.

The night-mist dim and darkling,
As o'er the roads we pass;
Lies in the morning sparkling,
As dew-drop on the grass.
E'en as the deeds of darkness,
Which come as midnight dews,
Appear as sparkling items
Next morning in the news,

Away in Carson city,
  Far in the Silver Land,
There lives one Justice Carey,
  A man of head and hand :
And as upon his table
  The Judge a-smoking sat,
There rowdied in a rougher,
  Who wore a gallows hat,

He looked upon the Justice,
  But the Justice did not budge
Until the younger warbled,
  "Say—don't you know me, Judge?"
"I think," said Carey, meekly,
  "Your face full well I know—
I sent you up for stealing
  A horse a year ago."

"Ay, that is just the hair-pin
  I am, and that's my line ;
And here is twenty dollars
  I've brought to pay the fine."
"You owe no fine," said Carey,
  "Your punishment is o'er."
"Not yet," replied the rover,
  "I've come to have some more.

"Fust-rate assault and batt'ry
  I'm goin' to commit,
And you're the mournful victim
  That I intend to hit.
And give you such a scrumpin'
  As never was, nohow ;
And so, to save the lawin',
  I guess I'll settle now."

Up rose the Court in splendour :
  "Young man, your start is fair,
Sail in, my son, sail over,
  And we will call it square!

Go in upon your chances—
  Perhaps you may not miss ;
I like to see young heroes
  Ambitionin' like this."

The young man at the older
  Went in with all his heft,
And, like a flying boulder,
  At once let out his left ;
The Court, in haste, ducked under
  Its head uncommon spry,
Then lifted the intruder
  With a puncher in the eye,—

A regular right-hander ;
  And like a cannon-ball,
The young man, when percussioned,
  Went over to the wall.
In just about a second
  The court, with all its vim,
Like squash vines o'er the meadow,
  Went climbing over him.

Yea, as the pumpkin clambers
  Above an Indian grave,
Or as the Mississippi
  Inunders with its wave,
And merrily slops over
  A town in happy sport,
E'en so that man was clambered
  All over by the Court.

And in about a minute
  That party was so raw,
He would have seemed a stranger
  Unto his dearest squaw ;
Till he was soft and tender,
  This morsel once so tough,
And then, in sad surrender,
  He moaned aloud, "Enough !"

He rose ; and Justice Carey
  Said to him ere he went,
"I do not think the fightin'
  You did was worth a cent.
I charge for time two dollars,
  As lawyers should, 'tis plain,
The balance of the twenty
  I give you back again.

"I like to be obligin'
  To folks with all my powers,
So when you next want fightin'
  Don't come in office hours ;
I only make my charges
  For what's in legal time,—
Drop in, my son, this evenin'
  And I'll not charge a dime."

The young man took the guerdon,
  As he had ta'en the scars ;
Then took himself awayward
  To the 'Ginia City cars.
'Tis glorious when heroes
  Go in to right their wrongs ;
But if you're only hair-pins,
  Oh, then beware of tongs !

In an earlier part of this writing I named a few of Mr. Leland's more laborious works. To these may now be added some in a lighter vein, such as *Meister Karl's Sketch Book*, published at Philadelphia in 1872, a book that was warmly commended by Washington Irving, and formed the subject of a long critical letter by Lord Lytton the elder (Bulwer), who took hints from it for *Kenelm Chillingly : The Egyptian Sketch Book*, 1874 ; *The Hans Breitmann Ballads* (Kegan, Paul, Trench & Co., 1893); *The Hundred Riddles of the Fairy Bellaria* (Fisher Unwin, 1893) ; *Legends of Florence, as told by the People* (David Nutt), which contains many humorous tales

and comments; *Gaudeamus, Translated from the German of Scheffel* (Kegan Paul & Co.,) containing the best humorous ballads in Germany since 1850; *Pidgin-English Sing-Song* (Kegan Paul), which includes the ballad of "Ping-Wing," illustrated by Tenniel in *Punch*, whose editor, referring to the poem, pronounced it "the best thing of the kind which had ever crossed the Atlantic;" then quite recently he furnished his admirers with *Hans Breitmann in Germany* (Fisher Unwin); *Songs of the Sea and Lays of the Land* (Adam & Charles Black); and two volumes of his *Memoirs*, also from the press of Fisher Unwin. These indicate a busy and a happy life; and we rejoice to know that the hand which gave them to the world, having lost none of its cunning, is still actively at work, and will increase the joy of living by sending out several new works of corresponding grit, perhaps in the course of the present year.

The following poem, in the step of "Hiawatha," is from *Songs of the Sea and Lays of the Land*, where "Carey of Carson" has also a place. It is an excellent piece for platform use, as Mr. Clifford Harrison, an eminent American elocutionist, soon discovered. Harrison has read it all over the States, and far beyond.

IN NEVADA.

Like an awful alligator,
Breathing fire and screeching hell-some,
With a pack of hounds behind him,
As if hunted by the devil,
Came the smoking locomotive,
Followed by the cars and tender,
Down among the mountain gorges,
Till it stopped before a village
As the starry night came on.

Just before a mountain village,
Where there was a howling shindy
Just around a bran-new gallows,
With a roaring bleezing bonfire
Casting a red light upon it,
While a crowd of roughest rowdies
Shouted "Cuss him! darn his vitals!
Bust him! sink him! burn him! skin him!"
Evidently much excited
As the starry night came on.

On the gallows stood a culprit,
Shrieking painfully for mercy.
As the train and engine halted,
Louder yelled the gasping victim.
Then outroared the grim conductor,
"What in thunder is the matter?
What's ye doing with that feller?
Why've ye got that fire and gallows?"
And unto him some one answered,
As the starry night came on:

"This all-fired, skunk-eyed villain,
Whom you see upon the gallows,
Lately stole the loveliest mewel
That you ever sot your peeps on,
For a hundred shiny dollars
Went and sold it to the Greasers;
But, as you perceive, we've nailed him,
And at present we're debatin'
Whether we had better hang him,
Or else roast him like an Injun,
Ere the starry night comes on.

"And I think ez ther ar' ladies
Here to grace this gay occasion,
In the train and quite convenient,
We had better take and burn him.
'Twould be kinder interestin',
Or, as folks may say, romantic
To behold an execution,

As we do 'em here in Hell Town
In the real frontier fashion
Ere the starry night comes on."

Up from the assembled ladies,
And from all the passengeros,
Went a scream of protestation,—
"What ! for nothing but a mewel !
Only for a hundred dollars
Roast alive a fine young fellow !
Never ! never ! never ! ne-ver !"
Falling on her knees, a damsel
Begged the maddened crowd to spare him,
And to her replied the spokesman,
As the starry night came on :—

"Since the lady begs it off us,
And as we ar' galiant fellers,
We will smash the tail of Jestis,
And will spare the orful miscrint
Ef you'll raise a hundred dollars
To replace the vanished mewel,
Then this fiend, unwhipped, undamaged,
May go wanderin' to thunder
Soon as he darnation pleases,
Ere the starry night comes on."

Straight among the pitying ladies,
And the other passengeros,
Went the hat around in circle,
Dollars, quarters, halfs, and greenbacks
Rained into it till the hundred
Was accomplished, and the ransom
Paid into Judge Lynch in person,
Who received it very gracious
And at once released the prisoner,
Sternly bidding him to squaddle,
Just as fast as he could make it
Ere the starry night came on.

And the lady who by kneeling
Had destroyed the path of justice,

Seized upon the fine young fellow,
He who had the mulomania,
Or who was a kleptomuliac ;
And she led him by the halter,
While the reckless population
Made atrocious puns upon it ;
And she stowed him in the Pullman
As the safest sanctuary
As the starry night came on.

It was over. Loud the whistle
Blew a signal of departure ;
Still the dying bonfire flickering
Showed on high the ghastly gallows,
Seeming like some hungry monster
Disappointed of a victim,
Gasping as in fitful anger,
Pouring out unto the gallows
Or the sympathetic scaffold
All the story of its sorrow,
As the clouds passed o'er the moon-face
And the starry night came on.

Soon the train and those within it
Reached and passed a second station,
And was speeding ever onward,
When at once a shriek came ringing—
'Twas an utterance from the lady
Who by tears had baffled justice ;
Loud she cried, "Where is my hero?
Where, oh, where the handsome prisoner?"
And the affable conductor
Searched the train from clue to car-ring,
But they could not find the captive,
He had clearly just evaded
At the station just behind them,
As the starry night came on.

Then outspoke a man unnoted
Hitherto ; "I heard the fellow
Say just now to the conductor,

Ere we reached the second tea-pot,
That he reckoned he must hook it
This here time a little sooner,
If he hoped to get his portion
Of the hundred, since the last time
He came awful nigh to lose it;
For it might be anted off all
'Fore he got a chance to strike it,
Ere the starry night came on."

And the Unknown thus continued:
"They hev hed that gallows standin'
All the summer, and the people
Mostly get ther livin' from it.
For they take their turns in bein'
Mournful victims who hev stolen
Every one a lovely mewel;
And they always every evenin'
Hev the awful death-fire kindled,
And the ghostly captive ready.
It's the fourth time I hev seen it,
Comin' through, and never missed it;
Only for a variation
Now and then they hire a nigger
For the people from New England,
As the starry night comes on.

"And they find that fire and gallows
Just as good as a bonanza,
For they got the Legislater
Lately to incopperate it;
And I hear the stock is risin'
Up like prairie smoke in Autumn.
Yes, in the world men diskiver
Cur'ous ways to make a livin',
Ez you'll find when you hev tried it
For a year or so about here."
And the passengers in silence
Mused upon this new experience,
Most of all the fine young lady,
As the dragon darted onward,
And the starry night came on.

GEORGE W. BAGBY.

THAN "Jud Brownin's Account of Rubinstein's Playing," with which every reader is familiar, there is not, perhaps, a more exquisitely humorous piece of descriptive writing to be found in the literature of any country. Not only is the piece imbued with sparkling and delicious humour, but it has the farther charm of being unique in conception, and remarkable for power and beauty. No one has attempted an imitation of it either in spirit or form; and it is not astonishing to find that even the hand that wrote it never again penned anything nearly its equal in the same line. Everybody, as I have said, knows "Jud Brownin'." Ask who wrote the piece, however, and a solitary individual here and there will say—"M. Adams," whilst the voice of the innumerable crowd will reply—"The author is unknown." Now, neither of

these responses is correct. The writer's name is not Adams, and yet it is known. But though "Jud Brownin'" has travelled far, and carried delight to countless human hearts, the author's name has not gone abroad with his popular creation. Originally contributed under the pseudonym of "Mozis Addums," to the pages of the *New York Music Trade Review*, the piece thus got the start, and travelling fast to begin with, it has kept up the pace even until now, and is familiar in lands where the name of Dr. George W. Bagby has never been heard.

The late Dr. Bagby, a native of Lynchburg, in the heart of Virginia, who studied medicine for a time, and afterwards took to journalism, which he prosecuted with great energy and success, wrote the piece when in the height of his literary career, more than a dozen years ago. Less known in America than many lesser men, Dr. Bagby's name is not known here at all, where the prime example of his native humour has come to stay.

He was born in 1828, and was a sickly youth. But his bodily misery seems to have acted as a sort of mental stimulation, for even as a boy he was quick to learn and wise to know. Educated at Princeton, New Jersey, and at Newark, Del., young Bagby began the study of medicine in his eighteenth year, and in due course took his degree of M.D. in the University of Pensylvannia, at Philadelphia. He then removed to Lynchburg, where his father was a merchant, and hung out his sign as a doctor. But it may be doubted if really he ever attended half a dozen cases, for almost immediately he found, without seeking, the career for which every endowment of nature had copiously prepared and deliberately dedicated him, and the scalpel was relinquished for the pen. As a journalist and general

man of letters he was a success. In the early fifties he became joint-proprietor and editor of the *Lynchburg Express*, but, even when running this paper, he was making frequent and welcome contributions to the *Charleston Mercury*, the *Richmond Dispatch*, the *Southern Literary Messenger*, and the *Atlantic Monthly*. On the early collapse of the *Express*, Dr. Bagby became the Washington correspondent of the *New Orleans Crescent*, and in 1860 he acceded to the editorial chair of the *Southern Literary Messenger*. And now his career becomes charged with special interest. In the *Messenger* he defended the rights of the South, till the sharp thunder from Fort Sumter told the war was begun. Though wholly unfitted physically for a campaign, Bagby entered the ranks as a private, and was found with the earliest troops who assembled at Manassas. There he attracted the attention of General Beauregard's Chief of Staff, and was in part relieved of duties for which he was unfit, by being detailed for clerical work at headquarters. It was not long before his health proved inadequate for even this service, and he was given a final discharge. Resuming his editorial and literary work, he continued the advocacy of Confederate independence, and wrote songs and poems to encourage the valorous hearts of his countrymen who were bearing the brunt of the battle at the cannon's mouth. One of the latter, which became instantly popular in America, is worth quoting here. It is called—

THE EMPTY SLEEVE.

Tom, old fellow, I grieve to see
  The sleeve hanging loose at your side;
The arm you lost was worth to me
  Every Yankee that ever died.

But you don't mind it at all,
You swear you've a beautiful stump,
And laugh at that damnable ball;
Tom, I knew you were always a trump.

A good right arm, a nervy hand,
A wrist as strong as a sapling oak,
Buried deep in the Malvern sand—
To laugh at that is a sorry joke.
Never again your iron grip
Shall I feel in my shrinking palm—
Tom, Tom, I see your trembling lip,
How on earth can I be calm?

Well, the arm is gone, it is true;
But the one that is nearest the heart
Is left—and that's as good as two;
Tom, old fellow, what makes you start?
Why, man, *she* thinks that empty sleeve
A badge of honour; so do I,
And all of us—I do believe
The fellow is going to cry!

"She deserves a perfect man," you say;
"You not worth her in your prime?"
Tom! the arm that has turn'd to clay,
Your whole body has made sublime;
For you have placed in the Malvern earth
The proof and pledge of a noble life—
And the rest, henceforward of higher worth,
Will be dearer than all to your wife.

I see the people in the street
Look at your sleeve with kindling eyes;
And you know, Tom, there's naught so sweet
As homage shown in mute surmise.
Bravely your arm in battle strove;
Freely, for freedom's sake you gave it;
It has perished—but a nation's love
In proud remembrance will save it.

Go to your sweetheart, then, forthwith—
  You're a fool for staying so long;
Woman's love you'll find no myth,
  But a truth, living, tender, and strong.
And when around her slender belt
  Your left is clasped in fond embrace,
Your right will thrill as if it felt,
  In its grave, the usurper's place.

As I look through the coming years,
  I see a one-armed married man;
A little woman with smiles and tears
  Is helping as hard as she can
To put on his coat, pin up his sleeve,
  Tie his cravat, and cut his food;
And I say, as these fancies I weave,
  "That is Tom and the woman he wooed."

The years roll on, and then I see
  A wedding picture bright and fair;
I look closer, and it's plain to me
  That is Tom with the silver hair.
He gives away the lovely bride,
  And the guests linger, loth to leave,
The house of him in whom they pride—
  Brave old Tom with the empty sleeve.

Besides conducting the *Messenger*, Dr. Bagby performed, during the war, much literary and journalistic work. He was the correspondent at the Confederate Capital of every southern paper that could secure the favour of being represented by him. He also formed many warm friendships, most of which proved lasting ones. He was just the sort of man whom to know was to love and esteem. And ever ready and willing to help others, he found others ready and willing to help him. It was because of this reciprocity of affection that, in 1869, when General James M'Donald, a distinguished Scottish Highlander, was made Secretary of

State in Virginia, he appointed his friend Dr. Bagby Assistant Secretary, and, as such, Custodian of the State Library. In this position Dr. Bagby remained until he was removed by a change of State administration, after which he resumed his journalistic and literary career, and occasionally occupied the lecture platform. He died in 1883.

Three volumes of selections from his miscellaneous writings have been published, edited by his widow, the freshness and variety of which make them instructive and stimulative reading. There is much impassioned and sincere writing about Old Virginia—Virginia before the war—the country life of which was familiar and dear to the author as the features of his mother's face. This is found particularly in the articles entitled "The Old Virginia Gentleman," and "Bacon and Greens," which were originally prepared for the lecture platform. From the words composing the latter title—"Bacon and Greens"—one would not expect a eulogy of Virginian State life and manners. It is quite as fantastic and enigmatical as Josh Billings's "Devil's Putty and Varnish," with which he used to illuminate the dead walls of the Californian towns, previous to the delivery of a lecture on human life and morals. But this is just truly American. And Dr. Bagby's writing is as American as the man himself. His humour, though it is peculiarly his own, is truly American also, and is constantly manifest even in his serious writing, giving us to know that we can distinguish a Yankee in a dress suit, or in a swimming-pond. Most of his humorous writing was given to the world under the name and in the character of "Mozis Addums," and appeared in the form of letters to the editor of the *Southern Literary Messenger*. They were commenced in 1857, and con-

tinued to appear up to near the end of the author's life. It was in the course of these that he attempted again something similar to "Jud Brownin's Account of Rubinstein's Playing." This time it was a description of the familiar opera "Fra Diavolo," and a bit of the best of it, which, though good, will show how much it falls short of the earlier effort. It is Jud again who speaks :—

"The play was a pretty play, funny, too ; and the music helped it. An English lord, with yaller side whiskers, is travelling with his wife, and is robbed by a robber bold, that is called Fray Devilo, because he ain't afraid of the devil. The Englishman, after being robbed, comes to a little country tavern kept by an old man with a pretty daughter—mighty pretty, and plump as a stump—called Zerlina, which her real name was Lousia Anne Kellogg, and a singer she is, too, from taw—a jarrer. Thar is a handsome young Italian Marquis that has fell in love with the Englishman's wife, and the villun he pursued her to the tavern, whar the old man set supper for him in the yard, and Lousia Anne waited on him. Well, while she's a waitin' on him, she tells him about the robber bold, that Fray Devilo, in a song that goes—

> "'On yonder rock reclinin',
> A fierce and somethin' nuther form behold,
> De jum tum toodle, te jum tum too,
> De jum tum toodle tee too.'

T-r-e-m-bull! and so on, windin' up very solemn, with 'Devil, oh! Devil, oh!' that makes your har rise. She sung so sweet that some of the notes made the tip of my heart melt. I could feel a clear drop of honey tremblin' on the pint of it, and the little boy in front of me, why, his eyes jest glistened, he loved it so. But

the play went on ; me an' the boy and all was gettin' mo' and mo' excited and interested. The girl's sweetheart was a captin' with soldiers that was ordered to hunt up old Devilo, and fetch him in, dead or alive. So off they goes, and then, sir—you'll hardly believe it, but it's the truth, if ever I told it—the gearl actilly ondressed and went bodily to bed befo' all them people. She done it, or I'm a liar. Somehow or other there was two of the robber band, dirty hounds they were, in the bedchamber when she come in, but they dodged into a closet, and she didn't see them. When she began to undo her things in dead earnest, 'twarn't no pretend about it, my heart began to bounce like a ball, and I looked around to see what the rest was agoin' to do. Thar they sat, the nicest ladies and gentlemen in town, lookin' at that lovely creatur' goin' to bed with deep emotion. But presently, when she kept on takin' off her things, the women looked kinder down to the flo', but the men didn't do nothin' of the kind ; on the contrary, quite the reverse. All was solemn and still. You could hear a pin drop. Nobody budged nor said a word. My heart went thumpity-thump, and the little boy fetched breath hard, and his eye that was next to me (I couldn't see the other eye), stood out like a door knob. Well, sir, when she stript off and showed her arms—white plump arms, varnish't in heaven, with little bits o' hands and tapering fingers—and spread abroad the glory of a magnificent bust, with the white frill of a well-bred, pretty, modest young woman, I leave it to Methusalah, or any other man in the prime of life, to say if she warn't a glorious creatur'. That was enough for me. By this time I had forgot all 'bout theatres, an' actin', an' that—it was life, the genuine thing. I wish John

may never see Mary, if she didn't take a chair, bring it right in front, and begin pullin' off her shoes and stockin's. A sort of a kind of shudder went through me, and the innocent lamb kept asingin' the whole enduring time. She had got off one shoe when—gentlemen, thar is limits to human natur'. Them people would a sot thar and let the gearl go on ondressin' of herself to the last farthing bitter end, but bein' the father of a family, it was my duty to put a stop to it, and I done it. I riz. I says, in an audible but friendly tone, says I—

"'Louisa Ann, my child, don't proceed with them proceedin's any further. Stop right whar you are. Thar is two black-hearted villins peepin' at ye out o' the closet, and nigh on to a thousand men tiptoein' and cranin' their necks to see you goo'd out here in the street. And there is a little boy jinin' me that I think is goin' to die, and—and I ain't very well myself. Pull down your blinds, my dear, and put out your light!'

"The gearl looked puzzled and purty flustered, but the people—since the world began, you never heard such an uproar and laughter, screamin', hurrahin', and hullabullooin' as they set up. Everybody stood up to get a good look at me, and two fellows grabbed me by the arm so hard they left prints of their fingers on me for a month. I thought they was goin' to carry me to the cage, and in the scuffle I split my coat in the back clean up to the collar, by which I presented a divided appearance for the remainder of the evenin'."

"Mozis's" essay on "Elize" might have been written by Josh Billings, the prince of humourous philosophers himself, it is so wise, so whimsically droll, and Billings-like. Says Mozis—

"I hate a fli. A fli has got no manners. He ain't no gentleman. He's an introoder, don't send in no card, nor ax a introduckshin, nor dont knock at the front door, and nuver, nuver thinks of takin' off his hat. Fust thing you know he is in bed with you and up your nose —though what he wants up thar is a mistry—and he invits hisself to breakfast, and sits down in your butter, without brushin' his pants. He helps hisself to sugar, and meat, and molasses, and bread, and preserves, and everything—don't wait for no invitashin. He's got a good appytite, and jist as soon eats one thing as another. 'Taint no use to challenge him for takin' liberties; he keeps up a hostile correspondence with you, wether or not, and zhoots hisself at you like a bullet, and he never misses—never. He'll kiss your wife twenty times a day, and zizz and zoo, and ridikule you if you say a word. And he'd rather you'd slap at him than not, 'cause he's a dodger of the doginest kind. Every time you slap, you don't slap him, but slap yo'self, and he zizzes and pints the hind leg of scorn at you till he aggravates you to distrackshin. He glories in lightin' every pop on the exact spot whar you druv him from, which proves the intenshin to teeze you. Don't tell me he aint got no mind; he knows what he's after. He's got sense, and too much of it, though he never went to school a day in his life, except in the sugar dish. He's a mean, millignunt, owdashus, predmedditated cuss. His mother never paddled him with a slipper in her life. His morals was neglected, and he lacks a good deal of humility mitely. He aint bashful a bit, and I doubts if he blushes ofting. In fact, he was nuver fotched up at all. He was born full grown; he don't git old neithur. Things git old, but he nuver gits old

—and he's impeddent and mischevious to the day of his deth. I hate a fli. Durn a fli!"

Now.

JUD BROWNIN'S ACCOUNT OF RUBINSTEIN'S PLAYING.

"Jud, they say you have heard Rubinstein play when you were in New York?"

"I did, in the cool."

"Well, tell us all about it."

"What! me? I might's well tell you about the creation of the world."

"Come, now; no mock modesty, Jud. Go ahead."

"Well, sir, he had the blamedest, biggest, catty-cornerdest pianner you ever laid eyes on; something like a distracted billiard-table on three legs. The lid was hoisted, and mighty well it was. If it hadn't, he'd a tore the intire insides clean out, and scattered them to the four winds of heaven."

"Played well, did he?"

"You bet he did; but don't interrupt me. When he first sat down he 'peared to keer mighty little 'bout playin', and wish't he hadn't come. He tweedle-eedled a little on the trible, and twoodle-oodled some on the bass—just foolin' and boxin' the things jaws for bein' in his way like. And I says to the man settin' next to me, s' I, 'What sort of fool playin' is that? And he says, 'Heish!' But presently his hands began chasin' one 'nother up and down the keys, like a parcel of rats scamperin' through a garret very swift. Parts of it was sweet, though, and reminded me of a sugar-squirrel turning the wheel of a candy-cage.

"'Now,' I says to my neighbour, 'he's showin' off. He thinks he's a-doin' of it, but he ain't got no idee, no plan of nothin'. If he'd play a tune of some kind or other I'd——'

"But my neighbour says, 'Hush!' very impatient.

"I was just about to git up and go home, bein' tired of that foolishness, when I heard a little bird waking away off in the woods, and callin' sleepy-like to his mate, and I looked up, and I see that Rubin was beginnin' to take some interest in his business, and I set down agin. It was the peep of the day. The light came faint from the east, the breeze blowed gentle and fresh, some birds waked up in the orchard, then some more in the trees near the house, and all begun singin' together. People began to stir and the gal opened the shutters. Just then the first beam of the sun fell upon the blossoms; a leetle more and it techt the roses on the bushes, and the next thing it was the broad day; the sun fairly blazed, the birds sang like they'd split their throats; all the leaves were movin' and flashin' diamonds of dew, and the whole wide world was bright and happy as a king. Seemed to me like there was a good breakfast in every house in the land, and not a sick child or woman anywhere. It was a fine mornin'.

"And I says to my neighbour, 'That's music, that is.'

"But he glared at me like he'd eat my throat.

"Presently the wind turned; it began to thicken up and a kind of thick grey mist came over things; I got low-spirited directly. Then a silver rain began to fall. I could see the drops touch the ground, some flashed up like long pearl earings, and the rest rolled away like rubies. It was pretty, but melancholy. Then the pearls gathered themselves into long strands and necklaces, then they melted into thin silver streams running between golden gravels, then the streams joined each other at the bottom of the hill, and made a brook that flowed silent, except that you could kinder see music, especially when the bushes on the bank

moved as the music went along down the valley. I could smell the flowers in the meadow. But the sun didn't shine, nor the birds sing; it was a foggy day, but not cold. The most curious thing was the little white angel boy, like you see in the pictures, that run ahead of the music brook, and led it on, and on, away out of the world, where no man ever was—*I* never was, certain. I could see the boy just as plain as I see you. Then the moonlight came, without any sunset, and shone on the graveyards, over the wall, and between the black sharp-top trees splendid marble houses rose up, with fine ladies in the lit-up windows, and men that loved 'em, but never got a-nigh 'em, and played on guitars under the trees, and made me that miserable I could a-cried, because I wanted to love somebody, I don't know who, better than the men with guitars did. Then the sun went down, it got dark, the wind moaned and wept like a lost child for its dead mother, and I could a-got up and there and then preached a better sermon than any I ever listened to. There wasn't a thing in the world left to live for—not a blamed thing; and yet I didn't want the music to stop one bit. It was happier to be miserable than to be happy without being miserable. I couldn't understand it. I hung my head and pulled out my han'kerchief, and blowed my nose well to keep from cryin'. My eyes is weak anyway; I didn't want anybody to be a gazin' at me a-snivelin', and its nobody's business what I do with my nose. It's mine. But several glared at me as mad as Tucker. Then, all of a sudden old Rubin changed his tune. He rip'd and he rar'd, he tip'd and he tar'd, and he pranced and he charged like the grand entry at a circus. Peared to me that all the gas in the house was turned on at once, things got so bright, and I hilt up

my head ready to look at any man in the face, and not afear'd of nothin'. It was a circus, and a brass band, and a big ball, all going on at the same time. He lit into them keys like a thousand of bricks; he gave 'em no rest, day nor night; he set every livin' joint in me agoin', and not being able to stand it no longer, I jumpt spang into my seat, and jest hollered—

"'Go it, my Rubie!'

"Every man, woman, and child in the house riz on me, and shouted, 'Put him out! Put him out!'

"'Put your great-grandmother's grizzly grey greenish cat into the middle of next month,' I says, 'Tech me if you dare! I paid my money, and you jest come a-nigh me!'

"With that several policemen ran up, and I had to simmer down. But I would a fit any fool that laid hands on me, for I was bound to hear Rubie out or die.

"He had changed his tune again. He hopt-light-ladies, and tip-toed fine from end to end of the key-bord. He played soft, and low, and solemn. I heard the church bells over the hills. The candles in heaven were lit, one by one; I saw the stars rise. The great organ of eternity began to play from the world's end to the world's end; and the angels went to prayers. . . . Then the music changed to water, full of feeling that couldn't be thought, much less told about, and began to drop—drip, drop, drip, drop—clear and sweet, like tears of joy fallin' into a lake of glory. It was sweeter than that. It was as sweet as a sweetheart, sweeten'd with white sugar, mixed with powdered silver and seed diamonds. It was too sweet. I tell you, the audience cheered. Rubin, he kinder bowed, like he wanted to say, 'Much obleeged, but I'd rather you wouldn't interrupt me.'

"He stopped a minute or two to fetch breath. Then he got mad. He runs his fingers through his hair. he shoved up his sleeve, he opened his coat-tails a leetle further, he drug up his stool, he leaned over, and, sir, he just went for that old pianner. He slapt her face, he boxed her jaws, he pulled her nose, he pinched her ears, and he scratched her cheek till she fairly yelled. He knock't her down, and he stampt on her shameful. She bellowed like a bull, she bleated like a calf, she shrieked like a rat, she howled like a hound, she screamed like a pig, and then he wouldn't let her up. He ran a quarter stretch down the low grounds of the bass, till he got clean into the bowels of the earth, and you heard thunder galloping after thunder, thro' the hollows and caves of perdition; and then he foxchased his right hand with his left till he got away out of the treble into the clouds, whar the notes was finer than the pints of cambric needles, and you couldn't hear nothin' but the shadders of 'em. And then he wouldn't let the old pianner go. He for'ard two'd, he cross't over first gentleman, he cross't over first lady, he balanced to pards, he chassede right and left, back to your places, he all hands'd aroun', ladies to the right, promenade all, in and out, here and there, back and forth, up and down, perpetual motion, doubled and twisted and turned and tacked and tangled into forty-'leven thousand double bow-knots.

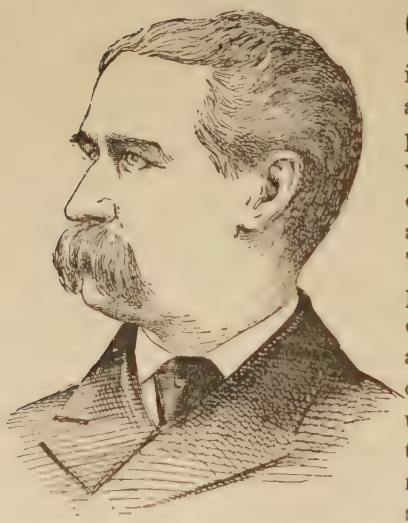
"By Jinks! It *was* a myxtery. And then he wouldn't let the old pianner go. He fetcht up his right wing, he fetcht up his left wing, he fetcht up his centre, he fetcht up his reserves. He fired by file, he fired by platoons, by company, by regiments, by brigades. He opened his cannon, siege guns down thar, Napoleons here, twelve pounders yonder, big guns, little guns,

middle-size guns, round shot, shells, shrapnells, grape, canister, mortars, mines and magazines, every livin' battery and bomb a-goin' at the same time. The house trembled, the lights danced, the walls shuk, the floor come up, the ceilin' come down, the sky split, the ground rock't — heaven and earth, creation, sweet potatoes, Moses, ninepences, glory, tenpenny nails, my Mary Ann, Hallelujah, Sampson in a simmon tree, Jerusalem, Tump Thompson in a tumbler cart, roodle-oodle-oodle-oodle-oodle, ruddle-uddle-uddle-uddle, raddle-addle-addle-addle, riddle-iddle-iddle-iddle, reetle-eetle-eetle-eetle, p-r-r-r-r-lang! per lang! per lang! p r-r-r-r-r-lang! Bang!

"With that bang he lifted himself bodily into the air, and he come down with his knees, his ten fingers, his ten toes, his elbows, and his nose, striking every single solitary key on that pianner at the same time. The thing busted and went off into seventeen hundred and fifty-seven thousand five hundred and forty-two hemi-demi-semi-quavers, and I know'd no mo'.

"When I come too, I were under ground about twenty foot in a place they call Oyster Bay, treatin' a Yankee that I never laid eyes on before, and never expect to see agin. Day was breakin' by the time I got to the St. Nicholas Hotel, and I pledge you my word I did not know my name. The man asked me the number of my room, and I told him, 'Hot music on the half shell for too.' I pintedly did."

CHARLES FOLLEN ADAMS.



CHARLES FOLLEN ADAMS is a humourist of a peculiar and superior kind—one who has a humourous way of telling a pathetic story. This sounds like a paradox, but no one who has read and re-read "Leedle Yawcob Strauss" will refuse to admit the correctness of the statement. In this famous little poem, which is familiar wherever the English language is perfectly or imperfectly spoken, we have revealed to us more conspicuously than almost anywhere else how narrow the dividing line may be that separates the smile from the tear; and how true it is that the finest species of all humour—the sort that remains to charm in every condition of temperament—is that which, while the smile is yet on the reader's lips, produces a lump in his throat and brings tears to his eyes.

Charles Dickens alone, amongst recent writers, perhaps, had the power of making the division narrower than the author of "Leedle Yawcob." When Oliver Twist's companion in the workhouse, for example, warns him in tones of lugubrious solemnity not to let the tears drop into his gruel, for the reason that the latter "is thin enough already," we are provoked to laughter and tears almost simultaneously. In perusing the poems of Charles Follen Adams—notably those which treat of child-life—the reader is not infrequently similarly moved. True, many of his poems provoke to laughter only—are funny and no more—but the world will always prize most highly those of them which have a tender and distinct thread of sentiment woven into their fabric, as it is in the deft use of this that we discover the greater power and charm of his writing.

Mr. Adams is a descendant of the revolutionary patriot, Samuel Adams, and was born at Dorchester, Massachusetts, now a part of Boston, in April, 1842. He was educated at the public schools, and at the age of fifteen entered on a business career. This latter, however, was destined to receive sudden and rude interruption. When he was only a little more than twenty the Civil War broke out, and he forthwith enlisted in the Thirteenth Massachusetts Infantry. On proceeding to the front he took an active part in several famous battles, until he was wounded at Gettysburg and there taken prisoner, after which he performed effective hospital service.

At the close of the war, and having nothing better to choose, Mr. Adams returned home and resumed the quieter pursuits of business, in which he still continues actively engaged from day to day. For, be it noted, literature has been merely the diversion of his life—he

has used it as a walking-stick and not as a crutch—and all that he has written has been produced after the labours of the day. While this is so, and his works have brought him fame, it is gratifying to know that they have also brought him something more substantial. His books have enjoyed a wide circulation, and fresh poems from his pen command good prices from newspaper and magazine proprietors.

It was in 1872 that Mr. Adams commenced writing those German-American dialect poems by which he has achieved scarcely less fame than the author of "Hans Breitmann." From Leland, I fancy, he took the hint of his dialect-form. But here it must be said the imitation begins and ends, and to the younger writer must be allowed the credit of working the seam to the higher and better purpose. There is greater vigour in the *Hans Breitmann Ballads*—more "saus and braus," more swagger and rant about "lager peer" and "pooty Frauleins," and all that is typical of the popular German character in American life. But there is sentiment even in an Americanised German. His heart is susceptible to the finer feeling that dominates in the kind father and dutiful husband; and by emphasising this fact and picturing it humourously to the world in the conglomerate speech of the elder Strauss, Adams has wrought out the finer idea, and performed the more charming and enduring work. "Leedle Yawcob," as I have said, his most famous poem, appeared first in the *Detroit Free Press* in 1876, and sprang immediately into popularity, being copied everywhere. But there is a story, in a way instructive, attached to its acceptance by the *Press*, which I must tell. The poem, it appears was submitted in the ordinary way, but for some reason or other failed to appeal to the editor, upon

whose judgment the fate of the poetic effusions devolved, and summarily found its way into the waste-paper basket. Another member of the editorial staff, happening to enter the room, espied the rejected manuscript lying crumpled up in the receptacle where so many hopes have been blighted, fished it out, and read it. It at once struck him as being a good thing, and, firm in his powers of discernment, he championed it, carried his point, and in due course it appeared in all the glory of print. The result we all know, but it is not generally known how near being lost to the world was the poem which made Charles Follen Adams famous. Nor is it generally known that the man who saved it was none other than Mr. Robert Barr ("Luke Sharp").

The verses are familiar enough to most people, but they will be read here again, I am sure, with undiminished pleasure :—

LEEDLE YAWCOB STRAUSS.

I haf von funny leedle poy
  Vot gomes schust to mine knee ;
Der queerest schap, der greatest rogue,
  As efer you dit see.

He runs und schumps, und schmashes dings
  In all barts of der house ;
But vot off dot ? he vas mine son,
  Mine leedle Yawcob Strauss.

He get der measles und der mumbs,
  Und eferyding dot's oudt ;
He sbills mine glass of lager beer,
  Puts schnuff into mine kraut.

He fills mine pipe mit Limburg cheese—
  Dot was der roughest chouse ;
I'd dake dot from no oder poy
  But leedle Yawcob Strauss.

He dakes der milk-ban for a dhrum,
  Und cuts mine cane in dwo,
To make der schticks to beat it mit—
  Mine gracious, dot vos drue!

I dinks mine hed was schplit abart,
  He kicks oup sooch a touse;
But never mind; der poys was few
  Like dot young Yawcob Strauss.

He asks me questions such as dese:
  Who baints mine nose so red?
Who vas it cuts dot schmoodth blace oudt
  Vrom der hair ubon mine hed?

Und vhere der plaze goes vrom der lamp
  Vene'er der glim I douse,
How can I all dose dings eggsblain
  To dot schmall Yawcob Strauss?

I sometimes dink I schall go vild
  Mit sooch a grazy poy,
Und vish vonce more I gould haf rest,
  Und beaceful dime enshoy;

But ven he vash asleep in ped,
  So quiet as a mouse,
I prays der Lord, "Dake anyding,
  But leaf dot Yawcob Strauss."

That poem is essentially humorous. But it has something more about it than the power to make one laugh. It has in it just the "one touch of nature which makes the whole world kin," revealed to us in the last verse, of which Dr. Holmes said, it "has moistened a thousand eyes, these old ones of mine among the rest."

By the skill of the poet "Leedle Yawcob" is there fixed in immortal childhood. In course of years, however, the real boy would grow up to be a man, and Papa Strauss would have perforce to regard him differently.

It was a happy thought of the author, therefore, to perceive this, and to supply the subjoined sequel describing the relationship between father and son, and how the former regarded the latter by the time when, instead of the father's trousers having to be cut down to fit the son, the son's trousers had to be shortened to fit the father. The poem, which is full of whimsical humour, is little known, and we must quote it in full, that the reader may catch all the flavour :—

YAWCOB GROWN A MAN.

Maybe dot you don'd rememper,
  Eighdeen—dwendy years ago,
How I dold aboudt mine Yawcob—
  Dot young rashkell, don'd you know,
Who got schiken-box and measles,
  Filled mine bipe mit Limburg sheeze,
Cut mine cane oup into dhrum-schticks,
  Und play all sooch dricks as dese.

Vell ! dhose times dhey vas been ofer,
  Und dot son off mine, by shings !
Now vas taller as hees fader,
  Und was oup to all sooch dhings
Like shimnasdic dricks and pase pall ;
  Und der oder day he say
Dot he boxes mit "adthledics,"
  Somevhers ofer on Back Bay.

Times vas deeferent, now, I dold you,
  As when he vas been a lad ;
Dhen Katrine she made his drowsers
  From der oldt vones of hees dad ;
Dhey vas cut so full und baggy,
  Dot id dook more as a fool
To find oudt eef he vas going
  Or vas coming home vrom school.

Now, dhere vas no making ofer
  Off mine clothes to make a suit
For dot poy—der times vas schanged ;
  " Der leg vas on der oder boot ; "
For vhen hees drowsers dhey gets dhin,
  Und sort off " schlazy " roundt der knee,
Dot Mrs. Strauss she dake her sceessors
  Und she cuts dhem down for me.

Shust der oder day dot Yawcob
  Gife me von elecdric shock,
Vhen he say he vants fife-hundred
  To invesht in railroadt schtock.
Dhen I dell him id vos beddher
  Dot he leaf der schtocks alone,
Or some feller dot was schmardter
  Dake der meat und leaf der bone.

Und vhen I vas got oxcited,
  Und say he get " schwiped " und fooled,
Dhen he say he haf a " pointer "
  Vrom some friendts off Sage und Gould ;
Und dot he vas on " rock bottom ; "
  Had der " inside drack " on " Atch—"
Dot vas too mooch for hees fader
  Und I coom oup to der scratch.

Dhen in bolidics he dabbles,
  Und all quesdions, great and schmall,
Make no deeferent to dot Yawcob—
  For dot boy he knows id all.
Und he say dot dhose oldt fogies
  Must be laid oup on der shelf,
Und der Governors and Mayors
  Should pe young men—like himself.

Vell ! I vish I was drasborted
  To dhose days off long ago,
Vhen dot schafer beat der milk-ban,
  Und schkydoodled droo der schnow.

I could schtand der mumbs and measles,
Und der ruckshuns in der house ;
Budt mine bresent dribulations
Vos too mooch for Meester Strauss.

Mr. Adams has published two collections of his verses, *Leedle Yawcob Strauss and other Poems*," which appeared in 1877, and *Dialect Ballads*, which came in 1888, and many of the pieces contained in these volumes are scarcely inferior to what has been quoted above. "Dot Baby off Mine," indeed, comes close on the heels of "Leedle Yawcob" in the race for popular favour. Among recent productions of his muse, "He Gets Dhere Shust Der Same," "Vos Marriage a Failure ?" and "Dot Long-Handled Dipper," (the latter of which has been set to appropriate music) are gradually working themselves into the estimation of the public, both in America and here.

Besides reciting in society for the pleasure of his friends, Mr. Adams is often a notable feature at authors' readings in Boston and elsewhere, and is widely esteemed for his gentlemanly character, as well as for his histrionic power and literary culture. In personal appearance, one says, "he is erect, of finely proportioned figure, his grey hair and moustache nearly white, but his grey eyes bright, and his face smooth as a child's. Not one wrinkle distorts his countenance."

He is, moreover, a family man, with two or three children of his own, from whom he has, no doubt, learned much of the endearment bestowed on "Leedle Yawcob Strauss," and "Dot Baby of Mine," which latter we must "dandle" once again in our arms before we bid adieu to its author :—

DOT BABY OFF MINE.

Mine gracious ! Mine gracious ! shust look here and see
A Deutscher so habby as habby can pe.
Der beoples all dink dot no prains I haf got,
Vas grazy mit trinking, or someding like dot,
Id vasn't because I trinks lager und vine,
Id vas all on account of dot baby off mine.

Dot schmall leedle vellow I dells you vas queer ;
Nor mooch pigger roundt as a goot glass off beer,
Mit a bare-footed hed, and nose but a schpeck,
A mout dot goes most to der pack of his neck,
Und his leedle pink toes mit der rest all combine
To gife sooch a charm to dot baby off mine.

I dells you dot baby was von of der boys,
Und beats leedle Yawcob for making a noise ;
He shust has pegun to shbeak goot English, too,
Says "mamma," and "bapa," and sometimes "ah—goo!"
You don't find a baby den dimes out off nine
Dot vos quite so schmart as dot baby off mine.

He grawls der vloor ofer und drows dings aboudt
Und poots efryding he can find in his mout ;
He dumbles der shtairs down, and falls vrom his chair,
Und gives mine Katrina von derrible skare ;
Mine hair shtands like squills on a mat borcubine
Ven I dinks off dose pranks off dot baby off mine.

Der vas someding, you pet, I don't likes pooty vell,
To hear in der night dimes dot young Deutscher yell,
Und dravel der ped-room midout many clo'es
Vhile der chills down der shpine off mine back quickly goes ;
Dose leedle shimnastic dricks vasn't so fine,
Dot I cuts oop at night mit dot baby off mine.

Vell, dese leedle schafers vas goin' to pe men,
Und all of dese droubles vill peen ofer den ;
Dey vill vear a vhite shirt vront inshted off a bib,
Und vouldn't got tucked oop at night in deir crib.
Vell ! Vell ! ven I'm feeble und in life's decline,
May mine oldt age pe cheered py dot baby off mine.

Not less enjoyable than the above—in some readers' memories it will linger longer—is his finely reminiscent poem—the last bit here—

MOTHER'S DOUGHNUTS.

I've jest bin down ter Thompson's, boys,
'N' feeling kind o' blue,
I thought I'd look in at the "ranch,"
Ter find out what wus new ;
When I seen this sign a-hangin'
On a shanty by the lake :
"Here's whar yer gets yer doughnuts,
Like yer mother used ter make."

I've seen a grizzly show his teeth ;
I've seen Kentucky Pete
Draw out his shooter 'n' advise
A "tender-foot" ter treat ;
But nuthin' ever tuk me down,
'N' made my benders shake,
Like that sign about the doughnuts
That my mother used ter make."

A sort o' mist shut out the ranch,
'N' standin' thar instead,
I seen an old white farm-house,
With its doors all painted red.
A whiff came through the open door—
Wus I sleepin' or awake ?
The smell was that of doughnuts,
Like my mother used ter make.

The bees wus hummin' round the porch,
Whar honeysuckles grew ;
A yellow dish of apple-sass
Wus settin' thar in view.
'N' on the table by the stove,
An old time "Johnny-Cake,"
'N' a platter full of doughnuts,
Like my mother used ter make.

A patient form I seemed ter see,
In tidy dress of black ;
I almost thought I heard the words,
"When will my boy come back ?"
'N' then—the old sign creaked ;
But now it was the boss who spake :
"Here's whar yer gets yer doughnuts,
Like yer mother used ter make."

Well, boys, that kind o' broke me up,
'N' ez I've "struck pay gravel,"
I ruther think I'll pack my kit,
Vamose the ranch 'n' travel.
I'll make the old folks jubilant,
'N', if I don't mistake,
I'll try some of them doughnuts,
Like my mother used ter make.

PETROLEUM V. NASBY.

"THE Saturday evening before President Lincoln left Washington, to go to the front, just previous to the capture of Richmond," writes Mr. Frank B. Carpenter, the artist, who was an inmate of the White House for several months, while engaged in painting his great historic canvas "The First Reading of the Emancipation Proclamation," and enjoyed very intimate association with the popular President, "I was with him from seven o'clock till nearly twelve. It had been a very hard day with him. The pressure of office-seekers was greater at this juncture than I ever knew it to be, and he was almost worn out. Among the callers that evening was a party composed of a Senator, a Representative, an ex-Lieutenant-Governor of a Western State, and several private citizens. They had

business of great importance, involving the necessity of the President's examination of voluminous documents. Pushing everything aside he said to one of the party, 'Have you seen the Nasby Papers?' 'No, I have not,' was the answer. 'Who is Nasby?' 'There is a chap out in Ohio,' returned the President, 'who has been writing a series of letters to the newspapers over the signature of Petroleum V. Nasby. Some one sent me a pamphlet collection of them the other day. I am going to write to "Petroleum" to come down here, and I intend to tell him if he will communicate his talent to me, I will swap places with him.' Thereupon he arose, went to a drawer in his desk, and taking out the letters, he sat down and read one to the company, finding in their enjoyment of it the temporary excitement and relief which another man would have found in a glass of grog."

Referring to the same subject the Hon. Charles Sumner, the great Senator from Massachusetts, says, "Of publications during the war, none had such charm for Abraham Lincoln. He read every letter as it appeared, and kept them all within reach for refreshment. . . . I had occasion to see President Lincoln very late in the evening of March 17th, 1865. The interview was in the familiar room known as his office, and also used for cabinet meetings. I did not take leave of him until some time after midnight, and then the business was not finished. As I rose, he said, 'Come to me when I open shop in the morning; I will have the order written, and you shall see it.' 'When do you open shop?' said I. 'At nine o'clock,' he replied. Very soon the President entered. Stepping quickly with the promised order in his hands, which he at once read to me. It was to disapprove and annul

the sentence of a court martial in a case that had excited much feeling. While I was making an abstract of the order for communication by telegraph to the anxious parties, he broke into quotations from Nasby. Finding me less at home than himself with his favourite humourist, he said pleasantly, 'I must initiate you,' and then repeated with enthusiasm the message he had sent to the author: 'For the genius to write these things, I would gladly give up my office.' Rising from his seat, he opened a desk behind, and taking from it a pamphlet collection of the letters already published, he proceeded to read from it with infinite zest, while his melancholy features grew bright. It was a delight to see him surrender so completely to the fascination. Finding that I listened, he read for more than twenty minutes, and was still proceeding when it occurred to me that there must be many at the door waiting to see him on graver matters. Taking advantage of a pause, I rose, and, thanking him for the lesson of the morning, went away. Some thirty persons, including Senators and representatives, were in the ante-chamber as I passed out."

A writer, humourous or otherwise, who could command Abraham Lincoln in this way, and at such a time, is worthy of attention, even after all these years. It was not "Old Abe" alone that was influenced by the Nasby letters either. Their effect on public opinion in America during the war was indeed great—not less, some maintain, than that of the *Biglow Papers*, although they lack the literary polish of the latter, and will not survive with these.

The writer, David Ross Locke, was a native of Vestal, Broome Co., New York, and was born on the 20th September, 1833. His father, Nathaniel Reed Locke,

was a soldier in the war of 1812, and a staunch anti-slavery man as far back as 1830, long before there was any organised opposition to the great cause; so it may be said of the son that he came honestly by his political notions at least. In his eleventh year David entered the printing-office of the *Democrat*, at Cortland, New York, where he became an expert in the art of type-setting. After the completion of his apprenticeship, a regular period of "tramping" ensued, and he visited many of the chief cities in the country, taking work as he found it, either as a journeyman printer, or a reporter and writer for newspapers. Travelling through the Southern States confirmed him in his anti-slavery sentiments, and a trip through what was then the West, determined him upon finally settling in that portion of the country. Previous to 1852, half-a-dozen attempts had been made to establish a paper in the brisk little town of Plymouth, Ohio, all of which had failed, the projectors invariably leaving the town in debt. In this year Mr. Locke joined issue with his friend, Mr. James G. Robinson, and started the *Plymouth Advertiser*, which is still in existence. The young men had just forty-two dollars between them, but it proved to be enough. They bought a second-hand outfit. They did their own work—edited the paper, set the type, did the press work, and everything else—and they soon won the confidence of the people, and prospered.

Subsequently Mr. Locke became interested in the *Mansfield Herald*, the *Bucyrus Journal*, the *Bellefontain Republican*, and the *Findlay Jeffersonian*, all of which, report says, he made successful. It was in Findlay, Ohio, that he commenced the "Nasby" letters, which were destined to make his name a household word over

the length and breadth of the American continent, and to carry it far beyond his native shores. In 1865 Mr. Locke removed to Toledo, Ohio, and took charge of the *Toledo Blade*, and the "Nasby Letters" thereafter appeared regularly in the columns of this journal until the lamented death of their author, in February, 1888.

With regard to the origin and character of the "Letters," the present editor of the *Toledo Blade* has explained more than once, that there never was an actual living model for Nasby—nor any of the other characters surrounding him. "Nasby was the representative of the whisky-drinking, corner-grocery statesman, who have always infested the country, and who, doubtless, always will, till the millenium comes. There never was any exaggeration in these portraitures. It is true that during the war waggon-loads of women made parts of processions at Democratic meetings with banners over them inscribed, 'White husband or none!' as though no matter whether the 'nigger' was freed or kept in slavery, they had no option as to whether they would marry white or black men. It is true that the stock argument against the war was 'nigger' supremacy, as though three millions of negroes could possibly have gained supremacy over forty-five millions of whites. The dread of the 'nigger' was what maintained the Democratic party during the war and five years after, and Nasby and his confreres were simply the besotted Cross-Roads Politicians who took advantage of the feeling to advance their own interests."

It is only by keeping these facts in his mind's eye that one is able fully to realize the humour and satire of Petroleum Vesuvious Nasby's letters, and can understand how they were read and commented upon from one end of America to the other; how stump-orators

used them; how newspaper editors and everybody else who had anything to do with politics, drew inspiration from them; and how they became at once a part of the political literature of the day.

Much of the writing does not appeal strongly to present-day readers, it is true. But some of the letters will never fail to strike a responsive chord in the common heart of humanity. Abhorrence of the blacks was the motive-power of the Democratic party. They could not bear the thought of equality with the negro. They would not allow their children to attend the school where the little nigger was admitted; and in Monroe County, Ohio, in 1867, a zealous Democratic school trustee did actually thrust the daughter of a fellow-Democrat out of school, supposing her to be the daughter of a negro, while the real object of his dislike sat quietly in her seat the while unmolested. This gave Nasby an opportunity which he was not slow to take. Hence the following letter, describing how

Mr. Nasby Regulates a School.

When the Almighty made niggers, he ought to hev made em so that mixin with the sooperior race would have been an impossibility. I rite these lines propped up in bed at my boardin house, my face beaten to a jelly, and perfectly kivered with stickin plaster; my nose, alluz the beauty and glory uv my face, is enlarged to twict it fair proporshens; my few remainin teeth hev bin knockt down my throat, my lips resemble sausages, my left ear is forever no more, and wat little hair wuz a hangin about my venerable temples is gone, my head is ez bald as a billyard ball, and twict its normal size. It come about thus:

There wuz trouble in one uv the Southern counties

uv Ohio. In a reliably Democratic township in that county is a settlement uv niggers, who, in the old time, ran away from Kentucky, and settled there where they could hev wat they earned, wich was jest so much swindled out uv Kentucky. Uv course, comin from Kentucky, these niggars are, many uv em, ez near white ez they can be. One uv em, who carried with him the name uv his master, and, ez he says, father Lett, is ez near a white man ez may be, and ez he married a wench who wuz a shade whiter than he, their children are jist a touch whiter than both uv them. Uv these he hed three daughters, rangin from sixteen to twenty.

Now this Lett is a disturber. He hed a farm uv perhaps 200 akers, and wuz taxed heavy for skool purposes, but his children wuznt uv course allowed to attend the skool. None uv the nigger children were. But Lett got the ijee into his head that there wuzn't no propriety in his payin taxes without enjoyin the benefits arizin from em, and aided and abetted by other niggers, who were wicked enough to complain uv payin taxes to the support uv white skools, he sent his daughters to the skool, directin them to present theirselves boldly, take their seats quietly and study perseveringly. They did so; the skool-marm, who wuz a young huzzy, with black eyes and nateral curls, from Noo Hampsheer, where they persekoot the saints, not only assented to receivin em, but gave em seats and put them into classes —think uv that—with white children.

There wuz trouble in that township. I wuz sent for to-wunst, and gladly I come. I wuz never so gratified in my life. Had smallpox broken out in that skool, there woodent hev bin half the eggscitement in the township. It wuz the subject uv yooniversal talk

everywhere, and the Democrisy wuz a bilin like a pot. I met the trustees uv the township, and demanded ef they intended tamely to submit to this outrage? I askt em whether they intended to hev their children set side by side with the descendants of Ham, who wuz condemned to a posishen uv inferiority forever? Kin you, I asked, so degrade yourselves, and so blast the self-respeck uv yoor children?

And bilin up with indignashen, they answered "never!" and yoonanimously requested me to accompany em to the skool-house that they might peremptory expel these disgustin beins who hed obtrooded themselves among those uv a sooperior race.

On the way to the skoolhouse, which wuz perhaps a mile distant, I askt the Board ef they knowed those girls by site. No, they replied, they hed never seen em. "I hev bin told," sed I, "that they are nearly white."

"They are," sed one uv em, "quite white." "It matters not," sed I, feelin that there wuz a good opportoonity for improvin the occasion; "it matters not. There is suthin in the nigger at wich the instink uv the white man absolootely rebels, and from wich it instinktively recoils. So much experience hev I had with em, that put me in a dark room with one uv em, no matter how little nigger there is in em, and that unerring instink wood betray em to me, wich, by the way, goes to prove that the dislike we hev to em is not the result uv prejoodis, but is a part uv our very nacher, and one uv its highest and holiest attriboots."

Thus communin, we entered the skoolhouse. The skoolmarm wuz there, ez brite and ez crisp ez a Janooary mornin; the skolers wuz ranged on the seets a studyin ez rapidly ez possible.

"Miss," sed I, "we are informed that three nigger wenches, daughters uv one Lett, a nigger, is in the skool, a minglin with our daughters ez a ekal. Is it so?"

"The Misses Lett are in the skool," sed she, ruther mischeeviously, "and I am happy to state that they are among my best pupils."

"Miss," sed I, sternly, "pint em out to us."

"Wherefore?" sed she.

"That we may bundle em out!" sed I.

"Bless me!" sed she, "I reely coodent do that. Why expel em?"

"Becoz," sed I, "no nigger shel contaminate the white children uv this deestrick. No sech disgrace shel be put on to em."

"Well," sed this aggravatin skoolmarm, wich wuz from Noo Hamshire, "yoo put em out."

"But show me wich they are."

"Can't yoo detect em, sir? Don't their color betray em? Ef they are so neer white that you can't select em at a glance, it strikes me that it can't hurt very much to let em stay."

I wuz sore puzzled. There wuzn't a girl in the room who looked at all niggery. But my reputashun was at stake. Noticin three girls settin together who wus somewat dark complectid, and whose black hair waved, I went for em and shoved em out, the cussid skoolmarm almost burstin with lafter.

Here the tragedy okkered. At the door I met a man who rode four miles in his zeal to assist me. He hed allus hed an itchin to pitch into a nigger, and as he cood do it now safely, he proposed not to lose the chance. I wuz a puttin on em out, and hed just dragged em to the door when I met him enterin in.

"Wat is this?" sed he, with a surprised look.

"We're puttin out these cussed wenches, who is contaminatin your children and mine," sed I. "Ketch hold uv that pekoolyerly disgusting one yonder," sed I.

"Wenches! You d—d scoundrel, them girls are my girls!"

And without waitin for an explanashen, the infooriated monster sailed into me, the skoolmarm layin over one uv the benches explodin in peels of lafter. The three girls, indignant at bein mistook for nigger wenches, assisted their parent, and between em, in about four minits, I wuz insensible. One ov the trustees, pityin my woes, took me to the nearest railroad stashen, and somehow I got home, where I am at present recooperatin.

I hev only to say that when I go on sech a trip again, I shel require as condishon, president, that the Afrikins to be put out shel hev enuff Afrikin into em to prevent sich mistakes. But, good Lord, wat hevent I suffered in this cause?

Besides the *Nasby Letters* Mr. Locke published *Swinging Round the Circle*, *A Paper City*, *The Moral History of America's Little Struggle*, *Nasby in Exile*, and other works. But the first named only is known on this side; and I will give just one other sample from that source.

Nasby's Story of His First Marriage.

I wuz a young man and singularly averse to work. Work never agreed with me. My prinsiple employment wuz to lay under trees all day and commune with nacher, onless ther wuz a grosery convenyent, with some stranger in it, wich wuz liable to ask the house up to take suthin. I didn't feel the need uv much

eggsercise, but wat I needed I cood git at playin seven-up or euker in the grosery I hev menshuned. Shufflin and deelin keerds develops the muscles uv the arm wonderful. Billyards wuz alluz too much for me.

The time cum, however, when it becum necessary to do suthin for a livelihood. I wuz too yung to go into politix, and the old man, my father, he got to that age when it wuz all he cood do to borrer for hisself. He wuz a gittin old, and wuzn't ez strong ez he wunst hed bin. He intimatid to me that the sooner I shifted for myself the better he'd be pleased. What cood I do? I hed no perfeshen that wood enable me to live without labor, and labor I woodent.

My father solved the problem. "Marry a widder," sed he—"a widder with a farm, and make her do the work. Yoo are ekal to overseein a farm. Aint yer?"

I remarked that I cood see other men swet without materially fatiguin myself, and that I thot his sejestion a good one. I wood adopt it.

Hard-by wuz the Widder Thompson, wich wuz the owner uv one uv the best farms uv the seckshun. It wuz 200 akers uv good land, well improved and well stocked. She wuzn't eggsackly wat wood be called a handsome woman, and wuz 15 yeers older than me, but I didn't mind that. What cared I that her teeth wuz all out, and that she hed a goiter, and weighed 200 pounds? Wat cared I that she had a habit uv goin about with her stockins down at her heels, and that she considered the time spent in comin her hair ez wastid? She hed a farm, and that wuz enuff for me.

I laid siege to this venerable female, and to my delite found her not averse to a second chance at matrimony. I wuz a helthy young man, and not bad lookin, and looked ez tho I mite run two or three farms to wunst.

She wuz rather lonesome on the farm, and it cost a pile uv money to hire help, and then they needed a man to look after them; and, to make a long story short, she acceptid me, and we wuz yoonitid in the holy bonds uv matrimony.

For a few days I lived in a elysium, watever that may be. I hed the best uv eatin, suthin the Nasby family did not indulge in, and Mrs. Nasby wuz ez complaisant ez a woman cood be. I hed cider to drink, the late Tompson left a good supply of terbacker, and things wuz a goin ez smooth ez cood be.

The fourth day Mrs. Nasby remarked that we hed hed a long rest, and it wuz time we got about our work.

"Pete," said she, "yoo want to take the oxen this mornin and go and break that lot behind the barn. It must be done to wunst, and shood hev bin done a week ago, but for this marryin biznis."

"Excoose me, Mrs. Nasby," sez I, goin out and layin down under an apple-tree, with my pipe lighted, "breakin ground is not my best holt. This soots better. I didn't marry to break ground."

"What!" she eggsclaimed.

"I merely say that I shall not break ground. My biznis on this farm is merely ornamental. I am willin to go and lay down in the feeld to be broke, and oversee the breakin, pervidid there is a shade-tree under wich I kin lay. But ez for takin hold uv a plow myself, never."

The woman looked at me in a dazed sort of way for a minit. She hed in her rite hand a pale uv soap-suds wich she wuz agoin to pour on the roots uv a grape-vine near me. Without a word uv warnin she histid that buckit uv suds, hot ez it wuz, all over me, and in

another second hed me by the hair. It wuz time that I assertid myself. I made up my mind to whale her then and ther, wunst for all, and hevin establisht my sooperiority, hev it all my way, ever afterward.

Assertin one's sooperiority is all well enuff, but yoo want to be shoor about yoor strength, that bein the main pint in any assertin biznis. I riz and grappled her, and found that assertin wuz wun thing, and establishin quite another. In less than a minit that infooriatid and muskeler female hed me on my back, and wuz a makin me bald-headed at a rate wich I never dreamed possible. She tore out my hair by the handfull, she peeled my face in a minit, and in less than four minits I looked very much like an old-fashioned frigate after an encounter at short range.

"Yoo won't work, won't ye? Well I guess you will! You'll work on this farm, or ye won't eet. You won't work, won't ye?"

And then, ez ef the thot incitid her to madnis, she tore out wat little hair I hed left, and knocked the last bit uv skin off uv my face, and dragged me out to the lot.

"Ther is the plow, there is the oxen, and there is the ground. Yoo sooperintend! I'll do that end uv the biznis. Git to work, yoo broot, er—"

I saw she wuz in earnest; and I yoked them oxen meekly, and went to work, in the hot sun, and she sot down under a shade-tree and kept me at it, without a minit's rest till nite.

Her soopremacy wuz assertid and established. Whenever I dared to murmur, she wood exhibit a lock uv my hair wich she kept by her, and that wuz enuff. I dared not question her authority.

Two mizrable yeers I spent on that farm—two yeers

uv agonizin labor. When she died I diskivered that the place wuz mortgaged for all it wuz worth, and that the money she got for it she hed bequeathed to a neece ev hern, and I wuz turned out on a cold world, with nothin, 'cept wat I managed to git off the place the nite before I left.

That wuz why I went into politix. After driftin some time, subsistin on wat chance threw in my way nites, I found that men uv my caliber are needed in politix, and that it is a shoorer livin than marryin widders; and I likewise made up my mind that ef I ever shood marry another widder it wood be one wich didn't weigh more than 90 pounds, and that I shood eggsamine the records afore the ceremony wuz pronounst, and see that the farm didn't hev no incumbrance onto it. Eggsperience is the only teacher.

But I never shel do it. Age hez dimmed my ardor, and long eggsperience in borrerin enables me to live in suthin like comfort, ef not in luxury. And then so long ez ther is a Democrisy sich men ez me are in demand; and jist before eleckshuns I am shoor uv enuff to drink, anyhow. I kin alluz pick up enuff to eat, and close are not difficult to come by in a keerlis and confidin kentry. Possibly I hev did ez well ez though the widder cood hev bin moldid to my will.

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY.

SINCE the genial, deft, and versatile Oliver Wendell Holmes laid aside his pen, never to lift it any more down here, there has been no poet, in America at least, who, in a simple, quaint, and often humourous way, has written songs that touch the heart, and go down into its depths, as do those of James Whitcomb Riley, widely known as the "Hoozier Poet." Many of Mr. Riley's best poems are couched in the dialect of Indiana, of which State he is a native, hence the name "Hoozier," just as natives of Kentucky are styled "Corncrackers," and so on. On the strength of his dialect verse, which is often fine indeed, and beautifully reminiscent, he has been sometimes called "the American Burns." But the designation is not apt. He has written his best in dialect, no doubt, as Burns also did, but beyond this, and the rhythmic melody of his lines, there is no other characteristic that might suggest comparison. None the less, Mr. Riley is a poet of true and exceptionally lovable quality. Than his poems,

"The Old Man and Jim," "Little Orphant Annie," and "The Old Swimmin' Hole," few better things of their kind have ever been written, and it will not surprise the reader when he is told that they have been popular "speaking pieces" all over the American continent, and here too, ever since they first appeared in print, a trifling number of years ago.

The "Hoozier Poet" was born in the town of Greenfield, Indiana, in the year 1854. His father was a prosperous country lawyer, and designed his son for the same profession, and for a time young Riley did actually study with a view to reaching the bar, but he soon discovered that Political Economy and Blackstone did not rhyme, and one sultry afternoon, without so much as saying good-bye, he slid out of the law-office in which he had been engaged, and ran away with a patent-medicine and concert waggon. With this he remained for a whole season, abusing the big drum when occasion demanded, and otherwise making himself useful. When he had succeeded so far in the perapatetic show line as to be the owner of an overcoat, with gut around the tail of it, and had some money in his pocket, he returned home, to think out another sphere of action. For a time he worked on several short-lived weekly newspapers, to the columns of which he contributed his earliest poems. These, like so many more earliest poems, caused little, if any, commotion at all in the world of letters, but the author was conscious of power, and imagined he could not get a hearing chiefly because of his obscurity; and having the facility of the mocking-bird in imitation, as the story has been told again and again, he decided to test his suspicions by producing a poem after the style of Edgar Allan Poe, whose "Raven" and "The Bells" have been recited all

over the English-speaking world. The plan was to publish it as a newly-discovered MS of that author. It was thus printed in the Kokomo (Indiana) *Dispatch*, accompanied by the statement that a visitor to Kokomo, seeing a poem signed "E. A. P.," written upon a fly-leaf of a worn copy of Ainsworth's Latin Dictionary, in the possession of a gentleman of that town, asked who wrote it. The owner of the volume replied that he did not know, that the book formerly belonged to his grandfather, who kept an inn near Richmond, Virginia. One night, he said, a young man, who showed plainly the marks of dissipation, applied for shelter for the night. He was shown a room, but when they went next morning to call him to breakfast he was gone, and had left the book, on the fly-leaf of which was found these verses :—

LEONAINIE.

Leonainie—angels named her,
And they took the light
Of the laughing stars, and framed her
In a suit of white.
And they made her hair of gloomy
Midnight, and her eyes of glowing
Moonshine, and they brought her to me
In the silent night.

In a solemn night of summer
When my heart of gloom
Blossomed up to greet the comer
Like a rose in bloom ;
All forebodings that distress me
I forgot as joy caressed me,
Lying joy that caught and pressed me
In the arms of doom.

Only spake the little lisper
In the angel's tongue,
Yet I, listening, heard her whisper:
"Songs are only sung
Here below, that they may grieve you—
Tales are told you to deceive you—
So must Leonainie leave you
While her love is young."

Then God smiled, and it was morning
Matchless and supreme,
Heaven's glory seemed adorning
Earth with its esteem,
Every heart but mine seems gifted
With the voice of prayer, and lifted
Where my Leonainie drifted
From me like a dream.

This poem was young Riley's introduction to the world of letters. It was copied by nearly every newspaper in the country; and so clever was the imitation that both English and American reviewers—amongst the latter William Cullen Bryant and Edmund Clarence Stedman—pronounced it genuine, and became very enthusiastic over it. The nice little practical joke, though not original, nor much to be commended, had, as will be seen, the desired effect. First of all, however, it cost the Indiana Chatterton his position on the *Dispatch*, from whence he drifted to Indianopolis, the capital of the State. Here, in course of time, he became attached to the *Daily Journal*, in the columns of which most of his widely-esteemed poetical work has appeared.

Of the younger brood of American poets James Whitcomb Riley stands assuredly at the very head, and his constituency, already very large, is daily widening. Within the last five years at least twice as many volumes of his poems and prose sketches have been published, which include *Neighborly Poems*, *Green Fields and*

Running Brooks, *Pipes o' Pan at Zekesbury*, *Afterwhiles*, *Rhymes of Childhood*, *The Flying Islands of the Night*, and *Sketches in Prose, and Occasional Verses*, all from the press of the Bowen-Merrill Publishing Company, Indianopolis, *Poems Here at Home*, by the Century Co., New York, and *Old-Fashioned Roses*, by Longmans, Green & Co., London. The scope of his muse is wide, and its tone, whether set to a humorous or a pathetic key, is ever healthy and human. The smile and the tear alternate in his work, too, like flecks of sunshine and shadow on the hillside on a cloudy summer day. As evidence of this read—

THE OLD SWIMMIN'-HOLE.

Oh ! the old swimmin'-hole ! Where the crick so still and deep
Looked like a baby-river that was layin' half asleep,
And the gurgle of the worter round the drift jest below
Sounded like the laugh of something we onc't ust to know
Before we could remember anything but the eyes
Of the angels lookin' out as we left Paradise ;
But the merry days of youth is beyond our control,
And it's hard to part forever from the old swimmin'-hole.

Oh ! the old swimmin'-hole ! In the happy days of yore,
When I ust to lean above it on the old sickamore,
Oh ! it showed me a face in its warm sunny tide,
That gazed back at me so gay and glorified,
It made me love myself, as I leapt to caress
My shadder smilin' up at me with sech tenderness.
But them days is past and gone and old Time's tuck his toll
From the old man come back to the old swimmin'-hole.

Oh ! the old swimmin'-hole ! In the long, lazy days
When the hum-drum of school made so many run-a-ways,
How pleasant was the journey down the old dusty lane,
Where the tracks of our feet was all printed so plain
You could tell by the dent of the heel and the sole
There was lots of fun on hands at the old swimmin'-hole.
But the lost joys is past ! Let your tears in sorrow roll
Like the rain that ust to dapple up the old swimmin'-hole.

Thare the bullrushes growed, and the cat-tails so tall,
And the sunshine and shadder fell over it all;
And it mottled the worter with amber and gold
Till the glad lilies rocked in the ripples that rolled,
And the snake-feeder's four gauzy wings fluttered by
Like the ghost of a daisy dropped out of the sky,
Or a wounded apple-blossom in the breeze's control,
As it cut acrost some orchard to'rds the old swimmin'-hole.

Oh! the old swimmin'-hole! When I last saw the place
The scenes was all changed, like the change in my face:
The bridge of the railroad now crosses the spot
Where the old divin'-log lays sunk and forgot.
And I stray down the banks where the trees ust to be—
But never again will their shade shelter me!
And I wish in my sorrow I could strip to the soul,
And dive off in my grave like the old swimmin'-hole.

That's the kind of poetry that makes a man's breast heave; that brings the light of the lost "langsyne" into his heart, and makes him feel how real his life has been after all.

Many mothers know Mr. Riley chiefly through his children's poems, which in every line reveals his exceeding love for the wee folks, and how he appreciates their unconscious humour, and reproduces it in the most delicious way in their own language. Not even his friend Eugene Field, the author of "Wynken, Blynken, and Nod," has written anything better in this way than "Out at Old Aunt Mary's," and

LITTLE ORPHANT ANNIE.

Little Orphant Annie's come to our house to stay
An' wash the cups and saucers up, and brush the crumbs away,
An' shoo the chickens off the porch, an' dust the hearth an' sweep,
An' make the fire, an' bake the bread, an' earn her board-an'-keep;

An' all us other children, when the supper things is done,
We set around the kitchen fire an' has the mostest fun
A-list'nin' to the witch-tales 'at Annie tells about,
An' the Gobble-uns 'at gits you
Ef you
Don't
Watch
Out!

Onc't there was a little boy wouldn't say his pray'rs—
An' when he went to bed 'at night, away up stairs,
His Mamma heerd him holler, an' his Daddy heerd him bawl,
An' when they turn'd the kivvers down, he wasn't there at all!
And they seeked him in the rafter-room, an' cubby-hole, an' press,
An' seeked him up the chimbly-flue, an' ever'wheres, I guess,
But all they ever found was thist his pants an' round-about!—
An' the Gobble-uns 'll git you
Ef you
Don't
Watch
Out!

An' one time a little girl 'ud allus laugh an' grin,
An' make fun of ever' one, an' all her blood-an'-kin,
An' onc't when there was "company," an' ole folks was there,
She mocked 'em an' shocked 'em, an' said she did'nt care!
An' thist as she kicked her heels, an' turn't to run an' hide,
They was two great big Black Things a-standin' by her side,
An' they snatched her through the ceilin' 'fore she know'd what she's about!
An' the Gobble-uns 'll git you
Ef you
Don't
Watch
Out!

An' little Orphant Annie says, when the blaze is blue,
An' the lampwick splutters, an' the wind goes *woo-oo!*
An' you hear the crickets quit, an' the moon is gray,
An' the lightnin'-bugs in dew is all squenched away,—

You better mind yer parents, and yer teachers fond an' dear,
An' cherish them 'at loves you, an' dry the orphant's tear,
An' help the poor an' needy ones 'at clusters all about,
Er the Gobble-uns 'll git you
Ef you
Don't
Watch
Out !

We have already seen in his poem of "The Old Swimmin'-hole" how our author revels in depicting the joys of homely country life, with its atmosphere, and the healthy natural objects surrounding it. That was a summer scene. In the following verses we discover the portrayal of a later season in the year, drawn with a not less graphic and dexter hand, and with the same full, warm heart giving life to the picture :—

They's something kindo' harty-like about the atmosfere
When the heat of summer's over and the coolin' fall is here—
Of course we miss the flowers, and the blossoms on the trees,
And the mumble of the hummin' birds and buzzin' of the bees ;
But the air's so appetizin' ; and the landscape through the haze
Of a crisp and sunny morning of the early autumn days
Is a picture that no painter has the colorin' to mock—
When the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in the shock.

The husky, rusty russel of the tossles of the corn,
And the raspin' of the tangled leaves, as golden as the morn ;
The stubble in the furries—kindo' lonesome like, but still
A-preachin' sermons to us of the barns they growed to fill ;
The straw-stack in the medder, and the reaper in the shed ;
The hosses in their stalls below—the clover overhead !—
O, it sets my heart a-clickin' like the tickin' of a clock,
When the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in the shock !

When your apples all is gathered, and the ones a feller keeps
Is poured around the cellar-floor in red and yellow heaps ;
And your cider-makin's over, and your women folks is through
With their mince and apple-butter, and their souse and saussage, too ;—

I don't know how to tell it—but ef sech a thing could be
As the Angels wantin' boardin', and they'd call around on *me*—
I'd want to 'commodate 'em—all the whole endurin' flock—
When the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in the shock.

It is not the sole, nor the main, nor any particular purpose of this writer to be humorous, but his sentiment always, however lofty, however earnest and sincere, is expressed in language, and by images, that manifest a natural and richly humorous mind. None but a true humourist, and whose humour, forsooth, is of the most refined and delicate variety, could yield poems in the fashion of "The Old Swimmin'-hole," "Little Orphant Annie," and "The Old Man and Jim;" or that will compare with the subjoined excellent piece" which is the last specimen of the Hoosier poet's craft that I can furnish here. It is all about the common every-day Christian, of whom the world rarely hears anything.

JIM.

He was jes' a plain, ever'-day, all-round kind of a jour.,
Consumpted lookin'—but la!
The jokeyest, wittyest, story-tellin', song-singin' laughin'est, jolliest
Feller you ever saw!
Worked at jes' coarse work, but you can bet he was fine enough in his talk
And his feelin's too!
Lordy! Ef he was on'y back on his bench agin to-day, a-carryin' on
Like he ust to do!

Any shop-mate 'll tell you there never was on top o' dirt
A better feller'n Jim!
You want a favour, and couldn't git it anywheres else—
You could git it o' him!
Most free-heartedest man that away in the world, I guess!
Give up ever' nickel he's worth,—
And, ef you'd a-wanted it, and named it to him, and it was his,
He'd a-give you the earth.

Allus a-reachin' out, Jim was, and a helpin' some
Poor feller onto his feet—
He'd a-never a-keered how hungry he was hisse'f,
So's the *feller* got somepin' to eat!
Didn't make no difference at all to him how he was dressed,
He ust to say to me:
"You togg out a tranp purty comfortable in winter time, a-huntin' a job,
And he'll git along!" says he.

Jim didn't have, nor never could git ahead, so overly much
O' this world's goods at a time,—
'Fore now I've saw him, more'n onc't lend a dollar and ha'f to, more'n likely,
Turn 'round and borry a dime!
Mebby laugh and joke about hisse'f fer awhile—then jerk his coat,
And kindo' square his chin,
Tie his apern, and squat hisse'f on his old shoe bench
And go to peggin' agin.

Patientest feller, too, I reckon, 'at ever jes' naturally
Coughed hisse'f to death!
Long enough after his voice was lost he'd laugh in a whisper and say,
He could git ever'thing but his breath.—
"You fellers," he'd sorto' twinkle his eyes and say,
"Is a-pilin' onto me
A mighty big debt for that air little weak-chested ghost o' mine to pack
Through all eternity!"

Now there was a man 'at jes' 'peared like to me
'At ortn't *a-never* died!
"But Death haint a-showin' no favours," the old boss said,
"On'y to Jim," and cried;
And Wigger, who puts up the best sewed work in the shop,
O' the whole blame neighbourhood,
He says: "When God made Jim, I bet you, He didn't do anything else that day
But jes' set around and feel good."

ORPHEUS C. KERR.

"ORPHEUS C. KERR," which is a wild play on the word "Office-seeker," is the *nom de guerre* of Robert Henry Newell, the veteran editor and prolific author, who was born in New York City, in December, 1836. It was during the great civil war, and in the earlier part of it, that Mr. Newell developed as a humorous and satirical writer, by the publication of the *Orpheus C. Kerr Comic Papers*. These, like the fulminations of "Hosea Biglow" and "Petroleum V. Nasby," appeared originally in the serial prints of the country; and levelled as they were occasionally against disciplinary crudities and abuses in the army service, they were frequently severely biting, as well as immensely funny.

Fun, however, was clearly the main purpose of the writer, and the great popularity of the sketches, both during the war and long after its devastating reign, affords the most eloquent proof of his success. It will

appear strange-like to some when they consider, as an earlier writer has suggested, how much of the comic and frolicsome element was associated with the prolonged and terrible struggle between North and South. Not less than a dozen nimble and facile pens were regularly employed in evolving comic copy out of its details. The Orpheus C. Kerr Papers are but a printed mass of cachinations at events at which the rest of the world were sorrowfully wondering. And to say they were relished as they appeared is a mean way of stating their effect; they were actually devoured with avidity, and the delight they afforded *then* is not forgotten even *now*. But they are the work of a true humourist, hence their charming success, and hence their living power. To appreciate the humour of the *Nasby Letters* or the sarcasm of the *Biglow Papers*, it is essential that the reader should first be familiar with the political life of America during the period out of which they sprang. The same knowledge is not required for appreciation here, as the reader will discover. Orpheus C. Kerr, in the war time, assumed to be a member of the "Mackerel Brigade," and in imagination, if not in fact, pursued the fortunes of war with those who had "struck for their altars and their fires." Here is his description of the noble animal, "Pegasus," on whose back he rode through slaughter to repeated victory. He calls him

MY GOTHIC STEED.

The horse is the swarthy Arab's bosom friend, and the Red Indian's solitary companion. One of these noble animals was presented to me last week by an old-maid relative, whose age I once guessed to be about nineteen. The glorious gift was accompanied by a touching letter. She honoured my patriotism, and the

self-sacrificing spirit that had led me to join the gallant Mackerel Brigade, and get a furlough as soon as a rebel picket appeared. She loved me for my mother's sake, and as she happened to have ten shillings about her, she thought she would buy a horse with it for me.

Ah! woman, glorious woman! what should we do without thee? All our patriotism is but the inspiration of thy proud love, and all our money is but the few shillings left after thou hast got through buying new bonnets. Oh, woman! thoughtful woman! the soldier thanks thee for sending him pies and cakes that turn sour before they leave New York.

But to return to the horse which woman's generosity has made me own—my be-yuteous steed. The beast is fourteen hands high, fourteen hands long, and his sagacious head is shaped like an old-fashioned pickaxe. Viewed from the rear, his style of architecture is Gothic, and he has a gable-end, to which his tail is attached. His eyes are two pearls set in mahogany, and before he lost his sight they were said to be brilliant. I rode down to the Patent Office the other day, and left him leaning against a post while I went inside to transact some business. Pretty soon the Commissioner of Patents came tearing in like mad, and says he —"I'd like to know whether this is a public building belonging to the United States, or a second-hand auction shop?"

"What mean you, sirrah?" I asked, majestically. "I mean," says he, "that some enemy to his country has gone and stood an old mahogany umbrella-stand right in front of the office."

To the disgrace of his species, be it said, he referred to the spirited and fiery animal for which I am indebted to woman's generosity. I admit that when seen at a

distance the steed somewhat resembles an umbrella-stand; but a single look into his pearly eyes is enough to prove his relations with the animal kingdom.

I have named him Pegasus, in honour of Tupper; and when I mount him, Villiam Brown, of Company 3, Regiment 5, Mackerel Brigade, says that I remind him of Santa Claus sitting astride the roof of a small Gothic cottage, holding on by the chimney. Villiam is becoming rather too familiar, and I hope he'll be shot at an early day.

At an early hour yesterday morning, while yet the dew was on the grass, and on everything else green enough to be out at that matinal hour, I saddled my Gothic steed Pegasus, and took a trot for the benefit of my health. Having eaten a whole straw bed and a piece of an Irishman's shoulder during the night, my architectural beast was in great spirits, and as he snuffed the fresh air, and unfurled the remnants of his warlike tail to the breeze of heaven, I was reminded of that celebrated Arabian steed which had such a contempt for the speed of all other horses that he never would run with them—in fact, he never would run at all.

Having struck a match on that rib of Pegasus which was most convenient to my hand, I lit a cigar, and dropped the match, still burning, into the right ear of my fiery charger. Something of this kind is always necessary to make the sagacious animal start; but when once I get his mettle up he never stops, unless he happens to hear some crows cawing in the air, just above his venerable head. I am frequently glad that Pegasus has lost his eyesight, for could he see the expression on the faces of some of those same crows, when they get near enough to squint along his backbone, it would wound his sensibilities fearfully.

It is but proper I should tell you that I have leased my Gothic Pegasus for a few days to an army carpenter, that gentleman having expressed a wish to use the animal as a model for some new barracks. Pegasus, my boy, when viewed lengthwise, presents a perspective not unlike a Hoboken cottage, and eminent builders tell me that his back is the very beau-ideal of a combination roof. I sent a side-view photograph of the fiery stallion to my venerable grandmother not long since, and she wrote back that she was glad to see I had my quarters elevated on piles to avoid dampness, but should think the hut would smoke with such a crooked chimney! The old lady is rather hard of hearing, and makes trifling mistakes without her spectacles.

The following little extract will be enjoyed by Scottish readers more than the writer anticipated perhaps; but if it affords enjoyment at all—even though the laugh is against the author—it will fulfil the purpose of its birth. In any view it merits quotation:—

"The Seventy-ninth Highlanders, came to town early last week, and are the finest body of Scotchmen that were ever half *kilt* by uniform alone. My heart warmed to them when I first saw them; and, with arms outspread, I greeted the gallant fellow nearest to me. With a tear of gratified pride in his eye, he exclaimed:

'Auld lang syne and Scots wha ha'e; but gang awa' wi' Heeland laddie thegither o' John Anderson my Jo; and, moreover, we'll tak' a richt gude willie wacht for muckle twa and braw chiel.'

I told him I thought so myself.

I'm sorry to say, my boy, that some members of this splendid regiment are badly off for trousers, and shock my modesty tremendously. They probably forgot them in their hurry to get to the war, and the

Union Pretence Committee ought to send them out an assortment of peg-tops at once. 'Not that I hobject to the hinnocent hamusements of the Highlanders, but that decency and propriety *must* be preserved within the limits of the harmy'—as the British showman observed."

Now and again the prose text of the letters is enlivened by a clever little poem, and my readers will enjoy none more than the beautiful Arkansaw moral nursery tale of

THE BEWITCHED TERRIER.

Sam Johnson was a cullud man,
  Who lived down in Judee;
He owned a rat tan tarrier
  That stood 'bout one foot three;
And the way that critter chawed up rats
  Was gorjus for to see.

One day this dorg was slumberin'
  Behind the kitchen stove,
When suddenly a wicked flea—
  An ugly little cove—
Commenced upon his faithful back
  With many jumps to rove.

Then up arose that tarrier,
  With frenzy in his eye,
And waitin' only long enough
  To make a touchin' cry,
Commenced to twist his head around
  Most wonderfully spry.

But all in vain; his shape was sich,
  So awful short and fat—
That though he doubled up hisself,
  And strained hisself at that,
His mouth was half an inch away
  From where the varmint sat.

The dorg sat up an awful yowl
And twisted like an eel,
Emitting cries of misery
At ev'ry nip he'd feel,
And tumblin' down and jumpin' up,
And turnin' like a wheel.

But still that most owdacious flea
Kept up a constant chaw
Just where he couldn't be scratched out
By any reach of paw,
But always half an inch beyond
His victim's snappin' jaw.

Sam Johnson heard the noise, and came
To save his animile;
But when he see the crittur spin—
A-barkin' all the while—
He dreaded hiderfobia,
And then began to rile.

"The pup is mad enough," says he,
And luggin' in his axe,
He gave the wretched tarrier
A pair of awful cracks,
That stretch'd him out upon the floor
As dead as carpet-tacks.

MORAL.

Take warnin' by this tarrier,
Now turned to sassidge-meat;
And when misfortin's flea shall come
Upon your back to eat,
Beware, or you may die because
You can't make both ends meet.

"The Arkansaw Tract Society," the author tells us, "put a note at the bottom of this moral lyric, stating that the 'wicked flea here mentioned is the same varmint which is mentioned in Scripture as being so bold:

'the wicked flea, when no man pursueth but the righteous, is as bold as lion.'"

That is very clever—note and all; even the mispunctuation of the Scripture text makes fun of a kind. Take then another poem, not less appetizing, together with part of its prose setting. Tom Hood might have written this, it is so cleverly penned.

"The last time the General of the Mackerel Brigade was in Washington he was so much pleased with the high state of strategy developed at the War Office, that he visited all the bar-rooms and ordered the tumblers to be at once illuminated.

"'Thunder!' says the General to Colonel Wobert Wobinson, of the Western Cavalry, as they were taking measures to prevent any possible mistake by seeing the enemy double, 'this war is making great tacticians of the whole nation; and if I wanted my sons to become Napoleons, I'd put them into the War Office for a week. My sons! my sons!' says the General hysterically, motioning for a little more hot water, 'Why are you not here with me in glory, instead of remaining home there, like ripe plums on the parent tree!'

"'Plums! plums!' says Colonel Wobinson, thoughtfully. 'Ah! I see,' says the Colonel, pleasantly, 'Your sons are dam-sons.'

"The General eyed the speaker with much severity of countenance, and says he—

"'If *you* have any sons, my friend, they are probably fast young men, and take after their father—at the approach of the enemy.'

"The General is rather proud of his sons, my boy; one of whom wrote the following, which he keeps pinned against the wall of his room:—

POOR PUSSY.

We count mankind and keep our census still,
  We count the stars that populate the night ;
But who, with all his computations, can
  Con catty nations right ?

In all the lands, in zones of all degrees,
  No spot im-puss-able is known to be ;
And sure, the ocean can't ignore the Cat,
  Whose capital is C.

Despise her not ; for Nature, in the work
  Of making her, remembered human laws,
And gave to Puss strange gifts of human sort,
  Before she made her paws :

First, Puss is like a soldier, if you please ;
  Or, like a soldier's officer, in truth :
For every night brings ample proof she is
  A fencer from her youth.

A model cosmopolitan is she,
  Indifferent to change of place or time ;
And, like the hardy sailor of the seas,
  Inured to every climb.

Then, like a poet of the noble sort,
  Who spurns the ways of ordinary crews,
She courts the upper-storied attic salt,
  And hath her private mews.

In mathematics she eclipses quite
  Our best professors of the science hard,
When, by her quadrupedal mode, she shows
  Her four feet in a yard.

To try the martial simile once more :
  She apes the military drummer-man,
When, at appropriate hours of day and night,
  She makes her ratty plan.

She is a lawyer to the hapless rat,
  Who strives in vain to fly her fee-line paws,
Evading once, but to be caught again
  In her redeeming claws.

Then turn not from Poor pussy in disdain,
  Whose pride of ancestry may equal thine ;
For is she not a blood-descendent
  Of the ancient Catty-line ?"

Mr. Newell, in the course of his career, has been associated, as editor or contributor, with the *New York Mercury*, *New York World*, and *Hearth and Home ;* and besides the humourous papers to which we have referred and quoted from at length, he has written and published *The Palace Beautiful*, *Versatilities*, and other popular works. Much of his verse is remarkably clever ; and his poem, "A Great Fight," which will conclude this notice, has, deservedly, a place in most collections of American humour.

A GREAT FIGHT.

There was a man in Arkansaw
  As let his passions rise,
And not unfrequently picked out
  Some other varmint's eyes.

His name was Tuscaloosa Sam,
  And often he would say,
"There's not a cuss in Arkansaw
  I can't whip any day."

One morn, a stranger passin' by
  Heard Sammy talkin' so,
And down he scrambled from his hoss,
  And off his coat did go.

He sorter kinder shut one eye,
  And spit into his hand,
And put his ugly head one side,
  And twitched his trowser's band.

"My boy," says he, "it's my belief,
Whomever you may be,
That I can make you screech, and smell
Pertiklor agony."

"I'm thar," said Tuscaloosa Sam,
And chucked his hat away;
"I'm thar," says he, and buttoned up
As far as buttons may.

He thundered on the stranger's mug,
The stranger pounded he;
And oh! the way them critters fit
Was beautiful to see.

They clinched like two rampageous bears,
And then went down a bit;
They swore a stream of six-inch oaths,
And fit, and fit, and fit.

When Sam would try to work away,
And on his pegs to git,
The stranger 'd pull him back; and so
They fit, and fit, and fit!

Then like a pair of lobsters, both
Upon the ground were knit,
And yet the varmints used their teeth,
And fit, and fit, and fit!!

The sun of noon was high above,
And hot enough to split,
But only riled the fellers more,
That fit, and fit, and fit!!!

The stranger snapped at Samy's nose,
And shortened it a bit;
And then they both swore awful hard,
And fit, and fit, and fit!!!!

The mud it flew, the sky grew dark,
And all the litenins lit;
But still them critters rolled about,
And fit, and fit, and fit!!!!!

First Sam on top, then t'other chap ;
  When one would make a hit,
The other 'd smell the grass ; and so
  They fit, and fit, and fit ! ! ! ! ! !

The night came on, the stars shone out
  As bright as wimmen's wit ;
And still them fellers swore and gouged,
  And fit, and fit, and fit ! ! ! ! ! ! !

The neighbours heard the noise they made,
  And thought an earthquake lit ;
Yet all the while 'twas him and Sam
  As fit, and fit, and fit ! ! ! ! ! ! ! !

For miles around the noise was heard ;
  Folks couldn't sleep a bit,
Because them two rantankerous chaps
  Still fit, and fit, and fit ! ! ! ! ! ! ! ! !

But jist at cock-crow, suddenly,
  There came an awful pause,
And I and my old man run out
  To ascertain the cause.

The sun was rising in the yeast,
  And lit the hull concern ;
But not a sign of either chap
  Was found at any turn.

Yet, in the region where they fit,
  We found, to our surprise,
One pint of buttons, two big knives,
  Some whiskers, and four eyes !

EUGENE FIELD.

OUTSIDE of Scotland, where capable singers of child-songs may be counted by the score, and which possesses a treasury of nursery poetry that no other country in the world has anything to compare with, there have been only a few poets who have given eloquent voice to the tender beauty and exquisite joy of child-life, as well as to the bewildering pathos and tear-sodden sorrow of child-death. Among the few, however—Blake, Wordsworth, Savage Landor, Longfellow, and others—a foremost place will be awarded to Eugene Field, the news of whose death at Chicago on the 4th of November, 1895, sent a thrill like the touch of an icicle to the hearts of mothers and children all over the American continent, and far beyond the confines of the Great Republic. And it was not women and children only who felt stricken by the loss of the loving and ingenious poet and accomplished man of letters. The Chicago papers

for several days succeeding the melancholy event were filled with tributes to his memory by the best-known literary men in America. Among the testimonials, too, there appeared a note from Sir Henry Irving, who telegraphed from New York:—"The death of Eugene Field is a loss not only to his many friends, but to the world at large. He was distinctly a man of genius, and he was dowered with a nature whose sweetness endeared him to all who knew him. To me he was a loved and honoured friend, and the world seems vastly the poorer without him." It certainly is vastly poorer by the loss of his genial presence. The beautiful child-fancies which he wove into his verses, however, these will abide; and the joy that lies near to tears in "Wynken, Blynken, and Nod," and "Little Boy Blue," and other creations of his muse, will continue to make human hearts happier, stronger, and better for many a day to come.

Eugene, or 'Gene Field, as his friends liked to call him, was born at St. Louis, of old Colonial stock, in 1850. While he was yet a child his mother died, and he was placed in the care of his aunt, Miss Mary French, of Amherst, Mass. At seventeen years of age he entered Williams College, and his father, Mr. Roswell M. Field, a distinguished lawyer of St. Louis, and himself a thorough scholar, demanded that the young student should carry on all his correspondence with him in Latin. Before the son had been long at College the father died, and 'Gene Field thus early was left an orphan and the sole heir to a considerable fortune. He however finished his curriculum at Williams College, and afterwards studied at Knox College, Galesburg, Ill., and at the University of Missouri. In 1871, having reached his majority, Mr. Field came to Europe, and

stayed for some time in London and in Paris, where he indulged in a taste for *bric-a-brac* and curios, so that he brought together a collection which in later years made his house one of the curiosity shops of Chicago. When he had spent all his money he returned to America, and went to the editor of the *Evening Journal* of St. Louis and asked for a post.

"What can you do?" asked the editor.

"I think," said Field, calmly, "that I am equal to any demand that may be made, or to take any good position that might be offered me."

The editor, amused, gave him his chance, and he started as a reporter. He got on, and in two years he was appointed editor. Subsequently he wrought on newspapers in St. Joseph, in Kansas City, and in Denver. In 1885, ten years after his marriage, Mr. Melville Stone brought him to Chicago, and from that year down to his death, Mr. Field wrote a column of wit and wisdom in the *Daily News*, under the heading of "Sharps and Flats." He was a great worker, turning out an average of three thousand words a day, besides his poems and more serious work, which was done after his editorials were finished.

"He was a type," says Mr. W. T. Stead, in a recent little notice of the poet in the *Westminster Gazette*, "the like of which we have nothing to compare in this country. Some of his admirers said he was a Western Theodore Hook. He certainly had all of Hook's appreciation of practical jokes, but there was that about him which recalls Dickens rather than Hook." Certainly one of the stories told of him is more Hook-like than resembling or suggesting anybody else. During his editorship of the *Kansas City Times* he found great amusement in annoying a man named Ferguson, who

was one of the "make-ups" on the paper, and the leader of a local Temperance Society. For over a year Field, on coming down to the office to go to work, would write a paragraph concerning Ferguson. Generally it ran like this:—"Mr. John Ferguson, the well-known 'make-up' of the *Times* composing-room, appeared for work yesterday evening in his usual beastly state of intoxication." And this entertaining bit Field would send down in some bundle of copy, and the others of the composing-room would set it up and say nothing. Poor Ferguson knew that this awful "personal" was in their midst, and every night would go carefully over every galley for the purpose of locating and killing it. Every now and then Field would omit it, and then the persecuted Ferguson was worse off than ever. As long as he could not find it, it might still be there. It almost drove the poor man off the paper. Now and then it escaped his eagle eye and was printed. On such occasions Ferguson's burdens were beyond the power of even a Christian spirit to bear. To make it a case for libel, of course, was out of the question.

Than 'Gene Field, it appears from the printed notices of his death, few literary men in America enjoyed a larger circle of warm personal friends. Leading men of Congress, the best known eastern writers, the stars of the theatrical profession, book gatherers, far and near—these, as well as many others of vastly differing types and studies of character, were his intimate associates and correspondents. And he never threw off an old acquaintance for any reason, good or bad. Thus it was a common happening in the *News* office, while Field still did his work there (latterly all his writing was done at home), for some ragged, unwashed, woe-begone creature, too much abashed to take the elevator, to go

toiling up the stairs and down the long passage into one of the editorial rooms, where he would blurt out fearfully, sometimes half-defiantly, but always as if confident in the power of the name he spoke—"Is 'Gene Field here?" Sometimes an over-zealous office-boy would try to drive one of these poor fellows away. And woe to that boy if Field found it out. "I knew 'Gene Field in Denver," or "I worked with Field on the *Kansas City Times*"—these were sufficient passwords, and never failed to call forth the cheery voice from Field's room—"That's all right, show him in here; he's a friend of mine." And then came a warm grip of the hand—some talk over former experiences—and the never-failing half-dollar—and one more unfortunate went out into the world blessing the name of a man who, whether he was orthodox or not in his religious views, always acted on the principle that it is more blessed to give than to receive.

But of all the poet's visitors, says a writer in *M'Clure's Magazine*, the most constant and appreciative were children. These he never sent away without some bright word, and he rarely sent them away at all. Nowhere could they find such an entertaining playmate as he—one who would tell them such wonderful stories, and make up such funny rhymes for them on the spur of the moment, and romp with them like one of themselves. It was in the homely incidents of these visits, and the like intimacy with his own children, that he found the subjects for his poems. He could voice the feelings of a child, because he knew child life from always living it. On his own children he bestowed pet names—"Pinney," "Daisy," "Googhy," "Posey," and "Trotty"—and they almost forgot that they had others. His eldest daughter, for instance, now a lovely young

woman, has remained "Trotty" from her babyhood, and "Trotty" she will always be.

Many beautiful and touching stories have been told of the poet's love for little ones, and the love of them and the esteem of their parents for the man who so unreservedly allowed his heart to go out towards them. One day, on the cars, Mr. Field chanced to sit near a working man, who was accompanied by his wife and baby. The father, it seemed, had heard Field lecture the night before, and had been deeply impressed. With great deference he brought his child up to the poet, and said—"Now, little one, I want you to look at this gentleman. He is Mr. Field, and when you grow up you'll be glad to know that once upon a time he spoke to you." At this Field took the baby in his arms and played with it for an hour, to the surprise and, of course, to the delight of the parents.

But it is time to present the reader with a sample of the poet's quality, and I dare not pass over, nor give the second place to "Wynken, Blynken, and Nod," which Mr. Andrew Lang, who is not very much given to gush concerning the products of the American muse, has pronounced "One of the best, if not the best child poem in the English language." It is certainly a very charming bit of verse.

WYNKEN, BLYNKEN, AND NOD.

Wynken, Blynken, and Nod one night
  Sailed off in a wooden shoe—
Sailed on a river of misty light
  Into a sea of dew;
"Where are you going, and what do you wish?"
  The old moon asked the three.
"We have come to fish for the herring-fish
  That live in this beautiful sea;
  Nets of silver and gold have we,"
    Said Wynken, Blynken, and Nod.

The old moon laughed and sang a song,
As they rocked in the wooden shoe—
And the wind that sped them all night long
Ruffled the waves of dew ;
The little stars were the herring-fish
That lived in that beautiful sea ;
"Now cast your nets wherever you wish—
But never afeared are we,"
So cried the stars to the fishermen three—
Wynken, Blynken, and Nod.

All night long their nets they threw
For the fish in the twinkling foam—
Then down from the sky came the wooden shoe
Bringing the fishermen home.
'Twas all so pretty a sail, it seemed
As if it could not be,
And some folks thought 'twas a dream they'd dreamed
Of sailing that beautiful sea :
But I shall name you the fishermen three—
Wynken, Blynken, and Nod.

Wynken and Blynken are two little eyes,
And Nod is a little head,
And the wooden shoe that sailed the skies
Is a wee one's trundle bed ;
So shut your eyes while mother sings
Of wonderful sights that be,
And you shall see the beautiful things
As you rock on the misty sea,
Where the old shoe rocked the fishermen three—
Wynken, Blynken, and Nod.

Field's love for his own children was beautifully pathetic. While abroad in this country with his wife in 1889-90, he decided to place them at school in Hanover. After the details had all been arranged, and as the children were sleeping in their rooms at the hotel, he became quite overcome by the thought of leaving them behind them, and retiring to his room he wrote

the touching poem entitled, originally, "Some Day," afterwards changed to "Some Time," and already so well known by frequent quotation, but which will never be stale.

SOME TIME.

Last night, my darling, as you slept,
I thought I heard you sigh,
And to your little crib I crept
And watched a space thereby ;
Then, bending down, I kissed your brow—
For, oh! I love you so—
You are too young to know it now,
But some time you shall know.

Some time, when, in a darkened place
Where others come to weep,
Your eyes shall see a weary face
Calm in eternal sleep.
The speechless lips, the wrinkled brow,
The patient smile may show—
You are too young to know it now,
But some time you shall know.

Look backward, then, into the years,
And see me here to-night—
See, O my darling! how my tears
Are falling as I write ;
And feel once more upon your brow
The kiss of long ago—
You are too young to know it now,
But some time you shall know.

After "Wynken, Blynken, and Nod," the best known poem from our author's pen is, of course, "Little Boy Blue," perhaps the most quaint and touchingly pathetic of all his lyrics, if not actually the most touching piece of its kind in our language. It was suggested, we learn, by the death of the poet's own infant son, but describes

the feelings of many bereaved parents who will read it with trembling voice in these pages.

LITTLE BOY BLUE.

The little toy dog is covered with dust,
But sturdy and staunch he stands ;
And the little toy soldier is red with rust,
And his musket moulds in his hands.

Time was when the little toy dog was new
And the soldier was passing fair,
And that was the time when our Little Boy Blue
Kissed them and put them there.

"Now, don't you go till I come," he said,
"And don't you make any noise !"
So toddling off to his trundle-bed
He dreamt of the pretty toys.

And as he was dreaming an angel song
Awakened our Little Boy Blue—
Oh, the years are many, the years are long,
But the little toy friends are true.

Aye faithful to Little Boy Blue they stand,
Each in the same old place,
Awaiting the touch of a little hand,
The smile of a little face.

And they wonder, as waiting these long years through,
In the dust of that little chair,
What has become of our Little Boy Blue
Since he kissed them and put them there.

I am sorely tempted to quote yet "The Rock-a-by Lady," "Seein' Things" (a capital young folks' recitation), and "The Humming Top," and some more of this dear man's intensely charming verses, but space forbids more than "The Little Peach," and "Our Two Opinions"—and these only as examples of his humour.

THE LITTLE PEACH.

A little peach in the orchard grew,
A little peach of emerald hue,
Warmed by the sun, and wet by the dew,
It grew.

One day, passing the orchard through,
That little peach dawned on the view
Of Johnnie Jones and his sister Sue—
Them two.

Up at the peach a club they threw:
Down, from the limb on which it grew,
Fell the little peach of emerald hue—
Mon Dieu!

John took a bite, and Sue took a chew,
And then the trouble began to brew—
Trouble the Doctor couldn't subdue—
Too true!

Under the turf where the daisies grew
They planted John and his sister Sue;
And their little souls to the angels flew—
Boo—hoo!

But what of the peach of emerald hue,
Warmed by the sun, and wet by the dew?
Ah, well! its mission on earth is through—
Adieu!

OUR TWO OPINIONS.

Us two was boys when we fell out,—
Nigh to the age of my youngest now;
Don't rec'leck what it was about,
Some small deeff'rence, I'll allow.
Lived next neighbours twenty years,
A-hating each other, me and Jim,—
He havin' *his* opinyin of *me*,
And *I* havin' *my* opinyin of *him*.

Grew up together and wouldn't speak,
  Courted sisters, and married 'em too;
'Tended same meetin'-house oncet a week
  A-hating each other through and through!
But when Abe Linkern asked the West
  For soldiers, we answered—me and Jim—
He havin' *his* opinyin of *me*,
  And *I* havin' *my* opinyin of *him*.

But down in Tennessee one night
  There wus sound of firin' fur away,
And the sergeant allowed thar 'd be a fight
  With the Johnnie Rebs some time next day;
And I was thinkin' of Lizzie and home,
  Jim stood afore me, long and slim—
He havin' *his* opinyin of *me*,
  I havin' *my* opinyin of *him*.

Seemed like we knew ther' was goin' to be
  Serious trouble for me and him;
Us two shuck hands, did Jim and me,
  But never a word from me or Jim!
He went *his* way and *I* went mine,
  And into the battle's roar went we—
I havin' *my* opinyin of Jim,
  And *he* havin' *his* opinyin of *me*.

Jim never came back from the war again,
  But I hain't forgot that last, last night
When, waitin' for orders, us two men
  Made up and shuck hands, afore the fight.
And after it all, it's soothin' to know
  That here I be, and yonder's Jim,—
He havin' *his* opinyin of *me*,
  And *I* havin' *my* opinyin of *him*.

'Gene Field's child songs are found in four volumes published by Messrs. Charles Scribner & Son, New York—*A Little Book of Western Verse*, *Second Book of Verse*, *With Trumpet and Drum*, and *Love Songs of Child-*

hood. It is only a few years since the earliest of them came out. Yet to-day few books are better known in America, and because, as one has finely said, "they hold in the hearts of their readers the same fond place that their author held in the hearts of the children whose thoughts and adventures he so aptly and tenderly portrayed." I should say that two of his works, *A Little Book of Western Verse*, and *A Little Book of Profitable Tales*, the latter a prose work, are issued in this country by Messrs. Osgood, M'Ilvaine & Co., London.

At the funeral of Eugene Field the Rev. Dr. Bristol said, "Some day out in God's Acre, where angels sing their 'Sleep, oh, Sleep,' a monument will mark the resting-place of our gentle poet; and let it be built, as was Daniel Defoe's in London, by the loving, grateful contributions of the children of the land." It was a wise and timely word—a beautiful suggestion. And now a Committee of Chicago newspaper men has the matter in hand, and the monument, to be built by the contributions of children, will be placed in Lincoln Park, Chicago. There may it long abide, a fit and beautiful compliment alike to the sweet singer and to the guileless and delightsome subjects of his songs. He would not himself have desired better memorial.

THE END.